

SUPPORTING TEACHERS SUPPORTING CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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Supporting Teachers Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs

ABSTRACT

The research which forms the basis of this thesis focuses on the developing practice of two local authority support services working in primary schools with the aim of changing the nature of provision for children with special educational needs. In the first case study, four support teachers work, half a week each, for one year in a junior school which appeared to have a high number of children with learning and behavioural difficulties. These support teachers were attempting to change the practice of the classroom teachers in this school. In the second case study, the work of four support teachers is observed, as they begin a change of role, moving from centre-based work with children to supporting the children in class, and trying to change the nature of provision for these children in school. Each case study was conducted over one year. The methodological approach was located within a constructivist paradigm. The methods were interview, observation, questionnaire and documentary analysis. The review of the literature, after examining the background to change within special educational needs provision, and within primary schools, goes on to consider issues particularly pertinent to this research, such as consultant and collaborative teaching skills, personal change and interpersonal skills needed for effective instigation of change. These issues support both the implementation and the analysis of the research. The final part of the thesis addresses the issues arising from the research, such as the training needs of the support teachers and class teachers regarding knowledge of the change process and an awareness of theoretical issues surrounding special educational needs, and dichotomies within the approach of the support teachers towards the process of change. The conclusion examines themes which have emerged from the research and which are applicable to current changes in special educational needs provision.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 General background

During the early 1980s, 'remedial' children in mainstream primary schools were removed from their classrooms to be given extra lessons in reading. Sometimes these lessons were provided by a remedial teacher from within the school; increasingly often the children were transported to a nearby remedial reading centre and taught by a remedial reading teacher employed directly by the local education authority. The 1978 Warnock Report and the 1981 Education Act led to most local education authorities undergoing some re-evaluation and reorganisation of their remedial services. The term 'remedial', with its implication of handicap and treatment, was replaced by the term 'special educational needs', implying a continuum of need extending from special into mainstream schools. As the 1981 Act obliged local education authorities to make provision for all children with special educational needs, there was a growth in the number of support teachers (formerly known mostly as remedial reading teachers, among other names) going into schools.

The ensuing changes were documented at this time (Bines 1986, Gipps, Gross and Goldstein 1987, Hegarty and Pocklington 1981). These accounts placed the changes in special educational needs provision within a wider context of influential factors, such as: changing views on child development and pedagogy and a move from an overwhelmingly psychological perspective on education to a sociological perspective; economic constraints obliging local authorities to increase pupil teacher ratios thereby reducing the possibility for small remedial classes; a growing view echoing developments in other countries, notably the United States of America and Scandinavia, which advocated the full participation of all pupils in the whole curriculum of a school.

In the late 1980s, the 1988 Education Reform Act heralded radical change for primary schools. As well as the maxim that all children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, this Act stipulated that all pupils with special educational needs should follow

the National Curriculum to the maximum possible extent. The 1993 Education Act also affirmed the idea that the majority of children with special educational needs are to be educated in mainstream schools and the 1994 Code of Practice established the organisational procedures to underpin a continuum of special educational provision.

The research which forms the basis for this thesis took place when support services (or remedial services as they were previously called) were undergoing rapid change during the late 1980s, and examines some of the issues which emerged from this metamorphosis in two local education authorities. The debate and dilemmas which emanate from these issues apply to current support teaching roles. They also apply to some elements of the in-school special educational needs co-ordinator role and, potentially, to advisory roles in general, as will be discussed in the analysis and conclusions.

During the late 1980s, many support teachers who had been working in off-site centres with small numbers of visiting children, mainly in the area of literacy difficulties, moved towards working inside classrooms in mainstream schools. In many cases this change in function was accompanied by a wider change in role, in that the support teachers (as they were most frequently titled) no longer focused entirely, if at all in some authorities, on providing help for individual or groups of children. They were now expected to act as consultants in advising teachers how to sustain the learning of children with problems. As an increasing emphasis was placed on entitlement to the curriculum for all children, the support teacher took on a wider informative role for the class teacher, even to the extent of disseminating information about the national curriculum. The audience was not only class teachers concerned with individual, targeted children with special educational needs, but often all the teachers in the school. Ostensibly, equality of access to the curriculum for all children was at the heart of the support teacher's advisory and in-service role; this generally involved the need to act as change agents within classrooms and schools.

Political and economic changes have also influenced the support services. Since the 1988 Education Reform Act on local authority funding, the development of grant maintained schools, and the 1993 Education Act with its advent of the 1994 Code of Practice, the development of support services throughout the country has taken place in

different ways. In 1989 the HMI produced a report on local authority support services which they concluded by stating:

The better support services are helping schools across a broad front to make more effective provision for all pupils. The support may be given directly to the pupils or it may be in the form of advice and help to the teachers. At present there are few guidelines on the most efficient ways to proceed.

(p.16 DoE 1989)

Many local education authorities had to tailor their finance for support services to fit in with government directed limits on budgets while releasing more spending capacity to individual schools (Housden, 1993). Debate has ranged over the means of meeting special educational needs, from complete devolution of resources to individual schools to the maintenance of local authority funded support services (Thomas 1992, Dyson and Gains 1993). These debates will be extended in the next chapter. Having set the scene for the research, the next section of this introduction addresses the overall aims of the research.

1.1 Overall aims

During the six years before this research began I had worked as a support teacher and then as acting co-ordinator of a support service in the London Borough of A. My own role had changed rapidly from sitting in an office waiting for children to come from the nearby primary and secondary schools for individual or paired sessions, to that of trying to work mostly inside primary classrooms, providing advice and resources for teachers and headteachers, and giving after school in-service sessions in schools and at the local Teachers' Centre. Within the support service there was considerable diversity of provision, with several colleagues resisting the move away from working within their centres. In some cases these centres provided very comfortable working conditions from a personal and professional point of view, containing extensive resources built up over the years, pleasant surroundings with armchairs, cooking facilities and a high degree of order and cleanliness, in contrast to many of the ad hoc facilities which were offered in schools. Other colleagues, especially some of those new to the service, felt that the small scale provision offered within the centres was not cost-effective and that children's learning could be developed much more effectively if a relationship was developed with the classroom teachers involved.

All of us agreed, however, that going into classrooms, working with teachers, trying to bring about change in practice in most cases, was challenging, often uncomfortable and required strategies which were new to our repertoire of support teaching skills. Like many support teachers (and remedial teachers, to use the terminology prevalent at the time) we had received considerable input regarding knowledge of the curriculum, especially literacy, resources and pedagogy but the task of persuading classroom teachers to change their practice had seldom been addressed in anything other than a superficial way.

The notion, therefore, of support teacher as change agent was still rare when this research began, ten years ago. Schools had not yet been subjected to the avalanche of legislative change although they had been led more gently towards altering practice by major reports and legislation such as Bullock (1975), the Warnock Report (1978) and The 1981 Education Act, Cockcroft (1982), equal opportunities policies and the Inner London Education Reports (Thomas 1985). These landmarks, although having differing agenda, did provide the basis for some piecemeal changes. In those schools which instigated change it had often been the headteacher or the local authority inspector who had been responsible. As a model of special educational needs provision which advocated the integration of children into mainstream schools began to become more accepted, the responsibility for curriculum and pedagogical reform frequently rested with classroom teachers along with peripatetic support, advisory teachers or in-school support teachers (Bines 1986). The development of a partnership between the support teacher and the classroom teacher began to be considered as an increasingly important factor in the achievement of effective change in classroom practice with regard to special needs.

Within the local authority in which I worked, as indicated above, there had been piecemeal change in the practice of the support service. At a time when, within the service, a considerable amount of professional reflection, academic development (much of which was rooted in the Open University course on special educational needs) and reading (Hart 1986, Bowers 1987) was focused on ways of altering the aims and policies of the support service, the Inspector for Primary Education offered us the opportunity to work in one primary school, regarded as failing by HMI and the local inspectorate, in order to bring about change in practice. With some modification of the original suggestions this opportunity was greeted as a means of piloting a new approach towards

working in classrooms and schools. There was a clear agreement that an evaluation of this pilot scheme would be required. My own position had changed as my co-ordinating role ended and it was agreed that I should act as evaluator. A term later I moved to a new role in teacher education and was able to carry on the research with a view to writing it up as part of a thesis.

At this early stage, after initial observations and consideration of some contemporary literature on changing provision for special educational needs, I decided to generate a case study of the changing practice in C Junior School during the pilot scheme. This case study was based on the work which the support teachers carried out in partnership with classroom teachers, the ultimate outcome of which was to enhance access to the curriculum for all children, but particularly those with special educational needs. The questions which provided the focus for my research were:

1. How is the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers perceived?
2. To what extent does change in the curriculum and in provision for children with special educational needs emerge from teachers working in this model?
3. What elements of this relationship need to be developed to ensure a sound foundation for effective practice?

A year after the pilot scheme ended I became involved as a consultant with the County of J's changing support service. Although very different in environment and in the origin of the change process, some of the same problems appeared to be emerging during attempts to establish working relationships between support teachers and classroom teachers, for example, the problem of getting class teachers to see the need for change, establishing an ethos of trust and reflection, mismatch between the class teachers' and the support teachers' views of what was happening. These issues provided a rationale for further enquiry which was negotiated to take place in J County's Integrated Support Service, during its first full year of operation. This enquiry also incorporated the above questions as a focus and was in the form of four studies of support teacher relationships with class teachers. I approached both sets of support teachers with a view to producing accounts of the nature of their relationships with primary class teachers, and to gaining insight into developing effective practice with a view to enhancing educational provision

for children with special needs. The next section of this chapter gives a brief outline of each chapter.

1.2 The organisation of the thesis

Chapter 2 looks at the literature and the theoretical background to many of the issues involved in the research. The examination of the literature spans the time during which the fieldwork was planned and implemented, as well as the time during which the analysis was carried out. Some debate and theory of a very recent nature is addressed in Chapter 7 where it contributes to the concluding section. The first part of Chapter 2 provides the context to the change in educational provision, both for children with special educational needs and within the mainstream sector. In order to understand recent (that is, over the last decade) debates about special educational needs it is necessary to be aware of the roots of and the theoretical influences underlying such provision. Similarly, the changes which have occurred in the primary sector during the last ten or so years can be considered to have provided the motivation behind the changes which formed the basis for my research and therefore merit consideration within the literature chapter.

The other parts of Chapter 2 set out to: examine the evolution of support services, their origins and growth, and attempt to trace changes in their ideologies; consider the kinds of change which support teachers were endeavouring to achieve, definitions of support, and also different models of and issues concerned with change; discuss the nature of collaborative partnerships in classrooms, the move from teaching as a solitary profession towards embracing elements of collegiality and co-operation with outsiders such as support teachers; look at the interpersonal and consultant skills which support teachers might need to deal successfully with instigating change. The final part of Chapter 2 identifies themes which emerge from the review of the literature and which informed my research.

Chapter 3 presents an account and critique of the research methodology: first, the relevant underlying paradigm, in this case constructivist (Guba and Lincoln 1989), a critique of which is developed from a consideration of the complexities emanating from the quantitative/ qualitative debate and acknowledges some of the intricacies therein;

second, the research methodology which is illuminative evaluation through case study; third, the research methods employed, with particular emphasis on participant observation, interviews and open questionnaires. The discussion here is related to the approaches used in this research and practical problems are addressed. Some examples of primary data are given in the appendices. This chapter also addresses the means of analysing the data collected.

In Chapter 4 the case study of the work of the support teachers in C Junior School, the London Borough of A, is presented. The first section of the chapter gives the background of the Support Service, including the change and development which was taking place at the beginning of the research project, the background to the local education authority in which the research took place and the background to C Junior School. The chapter goes on to focus on the work of four support teachers who spent a year in this school with a view to changing the approach to special educational needs provision through changing the whole curriculum. The project was entitled the 'Curriculum Access Pilot Scheme' and attracted considerable support and some funding at the beginning. This account of the project reveals some of the problems encountered and sets the scene for some of the emerging themes for later analysis.

Chapter 5 examines the work of another four support teachers, this time in four different schools in J County. Similar changes in role were going on here but from different organisational starting points. These four teachers had all moved into peripatetic roles from working within Remedial Reading Centres and had encountered different levels of success within the primary schools to which they were allocated. This account follows these four teachers during their first term of working in schools new to them and revisits them during the summer term of the same academic year. Although environmentally very different from the London Borough of A a number of similar themes emerged from the research in J county. Some initial analysis is begun in Chapters 4 and 5 but is mainly left to be covered in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 presents the key themes which emerge from the literature and the data. While the fieldwork and writing up of this thesis was taking place, considerable change was being implemented at national level in all areas of educational provision, as I have already indicated above. Inevitably, these changes have influenced my own thinking and the

priority of issues in the analysis of data. However, as the focus of this research is on relationships between different kinds of teachers, the essence of the enquiry remains relevant throughout these changes.

Chapter 7 is divided into three sections. In the first section I reflect on the research process in general terms and review some of the problems faced during the data collection and analysis. In the next section I examine some of the most recent literature and legislation. I then finish by addressing the research questions, presenting some conclusions which can be drawn from the data and the literature and which build on the themes discussed in the penultimate chapter, speculating on future developments.

1.3 Summing up

While well intended efforts to help students, families, and teachers often lead to the assignment of support personnel, merely labelling someone as a support does not ensure that he or she will be perceived as helpful by those receiving the intended support.

(York et al 1992 p.103)

As integration of children with special educational needs into mainstream classrooms has become more frequent in the United Kingdom, to be seen from the literature in the next chapter, the above quotation from the United States may help us to be wary of assuming that an extra teacher in a classroom automatically leads to enhanced educational provision. Teaching has generally been regarded as a solo activity in terms of one adult to a number of pupils. When I began this research it was relatively rare, in my experience, for primary teachers to work together, except in specific team teaching or open plan schools. In 1955, Jersild, investigating the relation between self-understanding and education commented that:

Many teachers expressed a deep loneliness, a loneliness related to the fact that so often (among teachers as among others) there is little mutual understanding or community of feeling with associates or even with 'friends'.

(p.9)

More recently, Nias (1989) also identified the solitary nature of teaching, a solitariness imposed by the architectural organisation of schools and which means that much of the working life of a teacher will be spent with children rather than with adults. Nias does also examine the ways in which teachers develop collegial and friendship relationships

within schools, but she points out the difficulties of teachers working alongside each other:

So, they cannot work closely together with others who have different educational goals or views on how to achieve these, for to do this would create an uncomfortable dissonance between their actions and their views of themselves.....people who are going in different directions (i.e. who are pursuing divergent aims, determined by incompatible values) cannot, by definition, pull together.

(Nias 1989 p.160)

Although mechanisms to enable teachers to work together are in place, such as those involved in support teaching, moderation of assessment and curriculum leadership, for example, we must be alert to the effectiveness of these partnerships in enhancing educational provision. An investigation into one such type of relationship, between support and class teachers, forms the basis of my research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review: the context of the research

2.0 Introduction

The sections in this chapter cover the changes in educational provision, both mainstream and special educational needs, which provide a relevant background for my research; the development of support services and changing models of support teaching, with specific reference to collaborative and co-operative teaching; the nature of the change process with particular relevance to the aims of support teaching; interpersonal and consultant skills needed for effective instigation of change. The discussion in these sections will provide a context and a theoretical framework for the implementation and the analysis of my research, and the final section will look at some of the themes which emerge from this examination of the literature.

2.1 Background to changes in educational provision

This section traces the development of education within the primary sector, and also considers some of the changes which have affected the educational provision for children with special educational needs. It thus examines the important debates pertinent to this research which are inherent in the practice of mainstream schools providing a complete education for all children.

Before the 1944 Education Act

A look back to the nineteenth century sees provision of special education developing in parallel with the growth of mainstream schooling. Accounts of these developments have been documented by Sutherland (1981), Potts (1982) and Tomlinson (1982), and details of the historical background to special education were given in the Warnock Report (DES 1978a). Before the beginning of mass education some charitable provision was already available for those with obviously discernible disabilities. For example, schools and institutes for the blind, deaf, physically handicapped and the mentally defective were opened in the latter part of the eighteenth century. These histories reveal that ten years after mass schooling had been made compulsory in 1880 the first state provision for children with special educational needs became available.

This provision could be seen as the root of a network of mostly segregated special education which continued to develop, facilitated by the contemporary growth of educational psychology and psychometric measurement.

In 1899 legislation permitted local authorities to set up special schools for children who were judged to be incapable of benefiting from ordinary education. Thereafter, work by psychologists such as Binet, Simon, Terman and Burt in France, the United States and Britain, developed the intelligence quotient as an instrument for removing children from mainstream education. The experience gained in the organisations run by voluntary bodies contributed towards the flurry of legislative activity which took place over the turn of the century and up to the first world war. This activity ranged over mainstream and special provision, creating a two-tier system of education authorities for elementary and secondary education in 1902, for example, as well as statutory provision for the blind and deaf, plus open air schools and boarding schools for physically handicapped children. At the same time a great deal of concern was being shown about the state of children's health and the schools' meal service and schools' medical service were established in 1907 and 1908.

Between the two world wars was a time of economic slump with few initiatives which required finance taking place in education. One report published in 1931, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Hadow indicated that a different perspective towards primary education was beginning to emerge (Board of Education 1931). This report produced a statement which held that the curriculum should be thought of 'in terms of activity and experience rather than knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored.' This could be seen as a forerunner to the profound changes which were alleged to have taken place in primary education in the 1960s, reference to which is made later in this chapter. Between the two world wars there were also important developments in what was then the voluntary sector, namely, the setting up of the first Child Guidance Clinic in 1926. Based on a psychoanalytic approach to children's problems and influenced by the ideas of Freud these Clinics were separate from the Schools' Psychological Service. It is possible to see how both these expansions during the inter-war years contributed in a major way to the future ethos of educational provision in the mainstream and special sectors, an ethos which only began to be challenged in the 1970s, for reasons to be discussed later.

This ethos was defined by the emphasis given to ways of separating children into educational categories through the use of intelligence testing and to ways of separating children into behavioural categories for treatment through the use of psychodynamic or (later on) behavioural techniques. This policy of separation underpinned the whole field of special needs provision from the very early days of charitable provision in the mid-eighteenth century. An important question to ask here is for whose benefit was the philosophy of separation enforced over more than two hundred years. Tomlinson (1982) in her seminal work, specifically questioned whether special education developed to serve the interests of ordinary education in terms of removing problems, rather than the interests of the children perceived as the problems and being educated separately. Blythman (1986), in considering the growth of mass education in Nigeria and comparing the beginnings of special provision there with those in nineteenth century Britain, debates whether this provision is a safety net or a safety valve. In other words, is the segregation of children from mainstream education for their benefit or is it a strategy for containment and administrative convenience? We could also ask at this point whether this form of segregation is also for the benefit of 'normal' children. These questions are particularly important when considering the desired outcomes of both support services under consideration in this research, namely, the retention of all children within mainstream classrooms.

1944-1978

This section takes a historical look at some important developments in mainstream primary and special needs provision which contribute more closely to a discussion of the situation at the onset of the research. The 1944 Education Act was long held as the most significant watershed in education this century, although its significance has probably now been superseded by the 1988 Education Act, of which more later. A unified educational system of free primary and secondary schooling available to everyone was based on an acceptance of the tripartite system of secondary education, whereby pupils were divided into three types - the academic, grammar school candidate, the applied arts or science, technical school candidate, and the practical skills, modern school candidate.

In Lowe's (1987) outline of primary education since the second world war it is possible to see how the swiftly changing demographic and social context affected the experience

of schooling for children in post-war England in terms of the rapid need for new buildings in the expanding suburbs, the consequent recruitment of large numbers of inexperienced teachers and the change resulting from widespread economic reconstruction. Despite post-war hopes, issues of social deprivation had not receded and the late 1950s and 1960s heralded a series of reports and publications which appeared to reinforce the need for extra or special provision for certain parts of the population. Floud et al (1956), Jackson (1962) DES (1963), DES (1967), Douglas (1964) were some of the many reports highlighting the differences in achievement between working class and middle class children. Education priority areas and nurture classes were just two of the schemes to emerge from this era which augmented mechanisms for separating certain groups of children away from the mainstream. It is interesting to note how this concept of 'nurture' appeared to elide the issues of social deprivation and special educational needs, particularly in inner-city areas such as the location of the first research account. Here, schools were accustomed to educational psychologists and support teachers removing the responsibility for 'different' children from the classteacher into a situation that could be likened to a 'nurture' class. These 'different' children were often defined not only by their special educational needs, but by a perceived deprivation in terms of experiences in and out of school, resulting from poverty.

The Plowden Report (DES 1967) did far more than recommend positive discrimination for the socially deprived. Seen as the augur of 'progressivism' in primary schools it was, in fact, a somewhat optimistic compilation of practice and philosophies which had been burgeoning for some time. There was, however, no evidence that the kinds of practices advocated by Plowden were ever widespread. Simon, during his research on the ORACLE project (1975 to 1980) concluded that:

...teaching was found to be largely didactic in character. The promotion of enquiry or discovery learning appeared almost non-existent...Further, as regards the content of education, a major emphasis on 'the basics' was also found...There was little evidence of any fundamental shift, either in the content of education or in the procedures of teaching and learning.

(Simon et al 1980 page 214)

This lack of evidence did not prevent the beginnings of widespread criticism of education, with the alleged new primary school practice as the chief suspect for the assumed universal decline in standards, according to the Black Paper Movement (Musgrove 1987) and certain elements of the national press, soon to be joined by

politicians of both major parties. This debate over the methods of primary school teaching will be referred to in later sections as it informs much of the support teachers' rationales for change in classrooms. Here it is enough to indicate that the ferment created by these criticisms, by the furore raised over the William Tyndale affair (Auld 1976) and by the increasing curtailment on spending power, was a powerful factor in creating some of the major reforms during the following decade.

Considering the parallel development of special education during this time, the 1944 Education Act was the first British legislation to include it overtly and laid down duties for local authorities:

...to afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes, and of the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school.

(Ministry of Education 1944)

The Act firmly established the concept of special education by laying down ten categories of handicap: educationally subnormal, maladjusted, blind, partially sighted, deaf, hard of hearing, physical handicap, delicate, speech defect and epileptic. Children classified as severely subnormal were not admitted to the education system until 1970.

Throughout these three decades under consideration in this section there was a rapid growth of pupils in special education, from 15,173 children in schools for the educationally subnormal (mild) in 1950 to 54,775 in 1978 (DES 1976 and 1978b). The 1944 Education Act specified that children in the ten categories of handicap could be educated in a mainstream school but this opportunity was not taken up. Detailed suggestions were made for provision (Ministry of Education 1944). Ten per cent of the school population were seen as being in the category educationally subnormal. Of these, one to two per cent would need to be educated in special schools; the remaining eight to nine per cent would be provided for in ordinary schools, where, it was suggested, they would be taught in small groups by sympathetic teachers, in attractive accommodation.

During the 1970s, the area of special education provision, in mainstream and special schools began to receive its share of scrutiny in England and Wales, and in Scotland.

As economic constraints began to apply, a fresh look was being taken at the issue of segregation and its efficacy in terms of improved educational achievements, and in terms of a human rights agenda. As many of the issues which arose from these new perspectives affected provision in the 1980s the next part of this section will address them in more detail.

1978-1988

Seeds for the changes in special educational needs provision during this decade were sown as early as 1966 when various organisations asked the government to set up a committee of inquiry into special education. There was a growing body of research which showed that children with mild and specific learning difficulties (those labelled educationally subnormal (mild) or in the 'remedial stream' in schools) demonstrated no long-term gains in progress when re-integrated back into their own classes following withdrawal to a remedial class (Lovell, Johnson and Platts 1962, Cashdan and Pumfrey 1969, Gurney 1975, Tobin and Pumfrey 1976). Further disquiet about special needs provision was reflected in the growing awareness that the ecology of the school and specifically the classroom could have a significant impact on educational achievement (Bennett 1976, Rutter 1979).

A committee eventually began its work in 1974 and produced the Warnock Report on 'Special Educational Needs' (DES 1978), a review of educational provision for handicapped children and young people. This report addressed a varied set of issues connected with the field of special education, including pre-school and post-school provision, parental involvement in multi-professional assessment procedures and a critique of the system of labelling children with special needs.

Of most importance for this chapter was the acknowledgement of a continuum of special educational needs rather than a series of cut off points at which children were delegated to certain types of provision. This concept of a continuum led to the recommendation that as many children with special needs as possible should be educated in ordinary schools. Three main forms of integration were distinguished: locational integration, where special units or classes are set up in ordinary schools; social integration, where children attending special classes or units mix with other children at lunch, play or out-of classroom activities; functional integration, where

children with special needs participate in normal education with their peers. To facilitate functional integration Warnock recommended a complex network of support in schools, a point which will be picked up later as an important basis for the expansion of support services.

The Warnock Report attracted a great deal of publicity, not all of it favourable. There was general acknowledgement that this Report had raised the profile of special needs, and along with the ensuing parliamentary Act (1981) continued to do so until more dramatic legislation took place in 1988. The most common criticism levelled at the Report focused on its innate conservatism and its failure to move from the medical/psychological paradigm in its approach to special educational needs provision. Mary Warnock refers to her critics:

I remember that, when I was still in love with the phrase 'special needs', I was mildly put out when some educational writer spoke slightly of the 'rhetoric of special needs'. My new clothes had been seen as unsuitable, dowdy or, even worse, vulgar and pretentious. I still don't agree with the implication that we, the authors of the Report, deliberately introduced the phrase to cover up our conservatism and inertia with the veil of humanitarian-sounding claptrap.

(Warnock 1982, p. 56)

Several commentators went much further than this in their criticism, notably Tomlinson (1982) who aimed to widen debates about special education by introducing sociological perspectives, which, she claimed, were an important omission in Warnock's considerations. Tomlinson presented a critique of the humanitarian view of special educational provision which, on the whole, had been taken for granted as its underlying ideology over the last century. Using conflict theories stemming from the works of Marx and Weber she posed questions about the underlying interests of special education, the legitimisation of selection and assessment processes developed to exclude children, the vested interest of expanding groups of professionals, the goals of special education and the underdevelopment of theory and practice therein, and the over-placement of black and working class children in special education (Tomlinson op cit).

Tomlinson was influential in generating widespread debate about the Warnock Report. She was at the forefront of a belief that Warnock had failed to see any problems in current mainstream school provision, and had endorsed the overwhelmingly psychological and medical focus prevalent in special education. Further criticisms

were found in, among others, Lewis and Vulliamy (1980), who maintained that problems which needed social solutions had been given psychological and medical explanations, and Barton and Tomlinson (1984) where the latter's original thesis was continued. The Open University course, 'Special Needs in Education' (1982a), also put forward a critique of Warnock and the ensuing 1981 Education Act from a view which strongly advocated integration, and questioned the dominance of the psychology profession in the special education world.

In the same year as the Warnock Report the Scottish Education Department published a progress report on the education of children with learning difficulties. This report highlighted the difficulties which large numbers of children, often more than fifty per cent in a class, had in coping with the mainstream curriculum. The Scottish Report, unlike Warnock, looked to changes within the school system as a remedy for improving achievement and suggested what became known as a 'curriculum deficit' model instead of a 'pupil deficit' model which had dominated thinking so far. Booth, Potts and Swann (1987) suggested that the *'respective impact of these two reports on practice has been in inverse proportion to their size'* (p. 3). In Scotland, widespread changes in the approach to curriculum development were implemented quickly, with a pilot scheme operating in Grampian where teaching was shared between remedial specialists, class teachers and subject specialists. These are discussed in the next section as a preliminary to examining the growth of support services in England. Here it is enough to say that a rapid, systematic response was set up in Scotland, in contrast to the 1981 Education Act, a somewhat amorphous, enabling piece of legislation the success of which relied on the intent and goodwill of local education authorities in England and Wales (Sugden 1989).

This 1981 Act attracted an even greater level of criticism in some quarters than the Warnock Report which preceded it. Although historically it has been regarded as an Act which promoted the integration of children with special needs into mainstream schools and classrooms, its critics felt that much of the wording was open to different interpretation according to the context. Again, like the Warnock Report, it did raise the general level of awareness towards special needs; it gave rise to many in-service courses and local authority reappraisals of provision. On the other hand, it legitimated

an increasingly large profession concerned with special needs and did nothing to alter the medical/psychological perspective already strongly criticised (Tomlinson 1982).

While considering the changes taking place in special educational needs during the 1980s it is important to bear in mind the general ethos of the educational world at that time. The disquiet started in the 1970s, kindled by the current Prime Minister, James Callaghan in his 1978 Ruskin lecture, subsequently entitled 'The Great Debate', continued throughout the 1980s, and indeed throughout the following decade. The 'radical right' was producing policy for the Conservative government and gaining the support of sections of the national press (Jones 1983, Hill 1991). In this atmosphere of criticism many teachers gained the impression that special schools were going to be closed and that they would have to cope alone with a range of children, no matter how severe their apparent difficulties.

Further reports, notably the Fish Report from the Inner London Education Authority (1985) reiterated the move towards integration, but also began to take for granted the support network suggested in Warnock, already in operation in Scotland, and growing in England (Gipps, Gross and Goldstein 1987). The Inner London Education Authority also produced a report (Thomas 1985) which indicated that practice in primary classrooms had not changed a great deal since the ORACLE research of Simon in the previous decade and was certainly not imbued with the rampant progressivism so beloved of the tabloid and serious press. The debate between traditional and progressive or child-centred approaches to primary education became the dominant discourse in the 1980s. Simon (1994) gives a useful account of this debate and the:

...thinking based on over-simplified reduction of differences of view to that of the crude dichotomy between 'traditional' and 'progressive' approaches...
(Simon 1994 p.14)

The work of Kelly (1989 among others) exemplified the debate over the nature of the primary curriculum. His earlier views on the importance of 'process' in primary teaching were influential and played a large part in the philosophical locus of my first account (see Chapter 4). After a sophisticated exposition of his view that:

...requires that we start with an analysis of the processes we are concerned to promote and a statement of the procedural principles which are to inform all our practice if we are to succeed in promoting them.
(Kelly 1989 p.112)

he finished his work with an analysis of the National Curriculum, based on the premise that it is '*essentially political, utilitarian and economic*' (p. 222). Kelly's criticism of the forthcoming legislation was one of many at this time which expressed trepidation over the increased centralisation of the education system and the perceived effect on primary education of subject based teaching and assessment.

Returning to the mid-1980s it can be seen that primary schools were under increasing pressure to change practice with regard to integration of children with special educational needs (both from special schools, and from remedial or nurture groups into the classroom), to consider multicultural education and equal opportunities, to develop maths teaching, to take on new forms of technology, to name only a few innovations. Pollard (1985) gives a useful account of the pressures and the financial constraints of this period which contributed towards a drop in teacher morale. Some schools adopted new practices with enthusiasm and success while others, as we shall consider in a later section of this chapter, maintained their status quo, as this was in the period before strong accountability procedures had become part of the system. Perhaps it was not surprising that outside agencies such as support services could attempt to offer with certainty and optimism the means of change and development to schools in such an unsettled atmosphere. The next section examines the development of support services and their relationship to mainstream education.

2.2 The Development of Support Services

The previous section has given an outline of changes in special educational needs provision in mainstream primary schools over the last century, and more particularly, over the ten years prior to the research. During this time there had been a purported change in the underlying approach towards the education of children with moderate learning difficulties, in that many had been integrated into the mainstream school system with some kind of support from teachers external to the school (Hegarty et al. 1981, Croll and Moses 1985, Gipps et al 1987). There had also been a move away from streaming towards mixed ability classes, and a reduction in the withdrawal of children from the classroom for remedial teaching (Hegarty 1987). Increasingly, however, the quality and the extent of the change generated by the Warnock Report and the 1981 Act was being questioned (Gipps 1988, Warnock 1991, Hegarty op cit).

The Warnock Report recommended that advisory staff and resources should be supplemented to provide effective advice and support to teachers concerned with children with special educational needs (DES 1978 13.3) and that a variety of specialist advisory staff should support small groups of mainstream schools (13.20). Response to these recommendations was piecemeal (Gipps, Gross and Goldstein 1987). The impetus for change did not always emanate from coherent local authority policies (as will be seen later) and debate took place as to the exact definition of 'support', to be considered in this section. First of all, however, before discussing the effectiveness of support services it will be useful to trace their origins and examine their growth in more detail. The earlier part of this section, therefore, will look at the history and growth of support services before going on to consider any dissonance between their approach to the curriculum and that of mainstream teachers.

History and background

The history of support services is closely linked with the history of in-school remedial teaching; indeed, some of the terminology such as 'special needs co-ordinator' and 'in class support' is shared. It is important, however, to bear in mind the different origins and policies underlying the two approaches to provision for pupils with special educational needs as well as the similarities. Since the execution of my research the 1993 Education Act, setting up the Code of Practice for implementation in 1994, has

institutionalised the conjunction of in-school and peripatetic support. This more recent legislation will be considered in Chapter 7 in more detail.

The concept of remediation can be traced through its links with educational psychology to the 1930s and 1940s and the publications of Burt (1937) and Schonell (1942). There had been a considerable growth of interest in psychology and mental testing with Burt at the forefront of development in England. This had been preceded by and was parallel with developments in the area of intelligence testing in France and the United States of America (Open University 1982b, Ford et al 1982). The idea that there was a group of children whose *'backwardness is accidental or acquired'* and who could be seen as remediable was widely accepted. This was based on a medical model with backwardness viewed as a disease which could be cured. The increasing influence of the psychology profession did not alter this underlying concept of illness and personal disorder in relation to educational difficulties (Ford et al, op cit). The model of individual assessments, observations, symptoms noted and diagnoses made, generated a treatment plan which, in theory, led to 'a cure'.

A brief glimpse was taken earlier (Section 2.2) at the origins of the Schools' Psychological Service and its offshoot, the peripatetic remedial service under many guises, throughout different education authorities. A more detailed look reveals a rapid growth in the 1950s and 1960s of the 'educational psychology industry', aptly described by Sutton thus:

...the collection of psychological insights and techniques grouped under the loose headings of 'educational psychology', which at the present time includes culling from mental measurement, developmental and social psychology, behaviourism and psycholinguistics, and abuts on to areas outside of psychology itself, such as linguistics, sociology and medicine.

(Sutton 1981 p. 109)

From the viewpoint of mainstream teachers educational psychologists were, and probably still are, seen as the gatekeepers to resources for children with special educational needs. Before the concept of segregation began to be challenged in the 1980s educational psychologists responded to schools 'referring' children with difficulties by carrying out a panoply of tests in order to determine intelligence quotient and reading age, among other measures. The results of these could have decided the future educational placement of the child, that is, an intelligence quotient below 75

would lead to placement in an educationally subnormal school and below 50 to a school catering for children with more 'severe' problems.

There were, however, certain children who did not fit neatly into these designated categories of educational provision: children who scored above the cut off point on intelligence tests but who seemed unable to learn to read. These children became the particular focus of the early Remedial Reading Centres and Services. In the majority of cases throughout the country where such Remedial Reading Centres operated, children were referred through the Schools' Psychological Services (Hegarty 1987, Gipps, Gross and Goldstein op cit) and attended the centres once or twice a week, with transport provided by the LEA where necessary. Sometimes the premises of this remedial provision would be located within the Child Guidance and Psychological Service complex, thus giving them an even closer association. Mostly the Remedial Reading Teachers would occupy premises which were in a disused part of a primary school, such as converted outdoor lavatories, or in a couple of classrooms made surplus through demographic changes in the school's intake. As this educational provision expanded throughout the 1970s and early 1980s budgets were increased and the centres built up considerable resources for using alongside teachers, or for lending to teachers, an aspect which became almost as important as direct teaching in some cases.

As well as visiting schools to demonstrate resources remedial teachers also began to visit schools to teach individual children who were withdrawn from their normal classrooms, instead of these children being transported to the centres. This practice varied enormously from authority to authority but in most cases there was a peripatetic element to the role. Many primary schools had been pressurised into cutting their own remedial posts, which were frequently of a part time nature, by the increasingly stringent financial provision from the local authorities. The first part of the 1980s was a time of teacher shortage so the person with the designated remedial role within school could often be called upon to act as a supply cover. The consequence of both these factors was an increasing reliance on the external remedial teacher for taking over responsibility for children with special educational needs. It was also at this time that the term 'support teacher' came into common usage, and will now be used for the rest of this thesis.

The advent of the Warnock Report and the 1981 Education Act institutionalised some of the changes which were already occurring in the shape of more in-school provision, and the increasing acceptance by class teachers of identified children being supported within their own classrooms. This was particularly apparent in Scotland where the Scottish Education Department's report (1978 op cit) criticised the existing remedial provision and recommended some radical changes. Booth (1983) gave an account of the compulsory one-year diploma taken by peripatetic remedial teachers in the Grampian region which was intended to lead to a major change of role.

Meanwhile, in England changes were not so coherent and relied on individual initiatives within local authorities, and sometimes on unsupported initiatives within the remedial service itself (Hancock 1988). Many services disengaged themselves from the Educational Psychologists and became part of the mainstream educational provision, using the Education Office or Inspector for Special Educational Needs as their line manager. In 1989 the HMI produced a report on Support Services for special educational needs which clearly indicated the disparity in quality of provision, ranging from teachers without extra qualifications who appeared to be doing the job at the end of their careers working with individual children outside the classroom, to highly qualified personnel acting in an effective advisory capacity for the whole school (DES 1989).

As this was also the time before the National Curriculum ostensibly applied some uniformity to the curriculum, although not, as yet, to pedagogy, there was disparity regarding approaches taken towards the curriculum among Support Service staff, and between Support Services and the primary schools which they were serving. The next section will examine some of the developments taking place within teaching, particularly the teaching of reading, which influenced the participants in this research.

Approaches to learning - Support Services and primary schools

Articulating the school curriculum has become the bete-noire of teachers heavily engaged in addressing the day-to-day requirements and pressures of working with a wide range of pupils in a variety of settings.

(Davidson 1988 p. 161)

This quotation seems to be an appropriate way of describing a common approach towards producing publicly accessible explanations of curriculum and pedagogy within individual primary schools during the 1980s. Similarly, although Support Services produced structural details of their work, there was little published acknowledgement of underlying philosophies of teaching and learning. Alexander's chapter (1984) on change and the primary school spelt out the desirability of self-evaluation and self-accountability which prevailed at the time. This chapter also indicated through reporting a HMI survey in 1982 that most schools used some sort of guidelines, mainly in reading and mathematics, but there was little written down in any other subjects. The guidelines which existed were seldom seen as good examples by HMI.

Approaches to teaching children with learning difficulties moved from the predominance of what Sugden (1989) called '*ability training based on a psychometric factor analytic view of human behaviour*' (p. 14) to precision teaching based on behaviour objectives, such as SNAP (Ainscow and Muncey 1981) and DATA-PAC (Ackerman et al 1983) among others. These resulted in the use of packs in the remedial centres, or lent to primary classrooms, based on psycholinguistic training using the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities, or skills or experience areas broken down into small parts and placed in sequence. Some approaches to teaching were based on a psychodynamic approach with the support teacher acting as therapist, or counsellor, influenced by the work of Rogers (1969) and perceiving the child as emotionally disturbed. None of these approaches was directly connected with the classroom curriculum within which the children were participating for most of their time.

More specifically in the area of reading, it is possible to see similar changes during the 1970s and 1980s. The dominant view of reading had been that of decoding, whereby the task could be approached as a series of increasingly difficult rules which were applied to limited text, at least for the beginner. The choice of vocabulary for these controlled texts was based either on phonetic regularity, or on a combination of word length and conceptual sophistication, with considerable repetition (Whitehead 1989). These approaches reflected the general learning styles outlined in the above paragraph, in particular the behaviourist approach. This way of teaching reading encompassed reading schemes, reading 'laboratories', phonic drills and the perception

of reading as a separate task or skill, not necessarily related to 'real' books or even real life tasks.

During the late 70s and early 80s a number of publications made a strong impact on the way in which many teachers approached the task of teaching reading. Smith (1971 and 1978) and Goodman (1977) were among several influential theorists who propounded the 'psycholinguistic' approach to reading, where children were seen to interact with text in a meaningful way, this text being in the form of stories and real books which would have a significant impact on children. Practitioners also wrote about their successful experiences of this approach. Bennett (1982), Waterland (1985) and Martin (1989) presented extensive evidence of their success in using children's literature when teaching reading, whether to successful learners or those with difficulties. Meek (1977 and 1983, among many other publications) also contributed through her support, teaching and commentary on the British scene, as did the Open University Reading Diploma and its spin-off in-service packs for teachers (1976 and 1982). Overall, although it would have been difficult to claim any sort of revolution in the teaching of reading as often assumed by subsequent press reports, there was evidence of an increase in the amount of children's literature, as opposed to reading schemes, available in classrooms. There was also evidence of children being encouraged to read for meaning rather than merely decoding, of children participating in structured projects where they shared books with their parents, and of teachers being increasingly discriminating in their choice of material for the classroom (Harland 1985).

It is difficult to amass any consistent evidence that either primary schools or Support Services were changing their fundamental approaches to the teaching of reading in any coherent way. Indeed, there is evidence (Gross and Gipps 1987, Meek 1983) of dissonance between support teachers and classroom teachers in their approaches to the curriculum generally, and in particular, in their approaches to the teaching of reading. Professional development within support services could be dependent on types of courses attended, the visiting lecturers invited to in-service sessions and to the local Teachers' Centre, and other projects in which support teachers may have been involved (Hancock op cit). Similarly, primary schools were responsible for their own staff development, if any, and could be swayed by idiosyncratic headteachers and

strong curriculum post holders, or local inspectors and the advisory service (Lowe 1987).

It was, of course, into this somewhat anarchic state that the national curriculum was introduced as a result of the 1988 Education Reform Act. The accompanying educational discussions provided a backdrop for the first case study; in the second case study the Support Teachers were regarded by their managers partially as agents to promote the national curriculum during their consultative work. In both cases it was too early for schools to have become engaged with any kind of curriculum certainties and consideration of the needs of children with learning difficulties seemed to have been overlooked during the initial introduction of the national curriculum.

After the 1988 Education Reform Act

As a background to the second case study and to the analysis of my research, it is useful to consider developments in special needs provision since the 1988 Education Reform Act. In terms of an overall effect on the work of support services, the devolution of budgets to individual schools, an important feature of this Act, presented the greatest financial threat to the viability of these services being resourced by local education authorities. The adoption by recent governments of a market-based approach to the delivery and management of education, including in some authorities the purchasing of support and advisory expertise for special needs provision (Bines and Thomas, 1993, Audit Commission/ HMI 1992) has led to a reduction of centralised resources. Housden (1993) presents a scenario of growing pressure on LEA support services for special needs, as the amount of money delegated to schools was increased. He does, nevertheless, acknowledge that the 1993 Education Act will enable local authorities to continue a strategic supporting role if they take up the opportunity.

They are not only to be providers of the last resort with duties in a narrowly defined area of special needs, but will also have wide generic roles in planning school provision, in resourcing schools, in curriculum, assessment and training, and in advice to Heads and Governors.

(Housden 1993 p.19)

Circular 6/94 (DFE) offers guidance on the organisation of special educational provision in the light of measures within the Education Act 1993. This Circular

clearly identifies the mechanisms whereby local education authorities should maintain support services not only for pupils who were at stage 3 of the five stage model in the Code of Practice, but also to play an important role in helping schools take early action in preventing learning difficulties from developing. Examples of the areas in which SEN support services may operate are given in the Circular: advice to teachers, support to curriculum development for children with SEN, identification, observation and assessment of individual pupils with SEN, use of technology, including information technology, the making of special educational provision for pupils with SEN, direct teaching/practical support for classroom teachers and the professional development of teachers in working with pupils with SEN and the development of the school's policy on SEN.

Although the provision of and payment for support services is now in line with the market philosophy of the current government in that schools are not obliged to purchase support from their own authority's service, the definition of the role of the support services appears little different from that extant before the 1988 ERA. Before the Code of Practice there were already accounts of support services' attempts to address the marketing ethos and speculation as to how support services would be affected as administrative changes took hold (MacConville 1991, Bines and Thomas *op cit*, Lacey and Lomas 1993). There appears as yet to be little clear evidence as to whether support services have declined and government directives have argued for the continuing existence of psychological and support teaching services of all kinds (Fish and Evans 1995). What will be important in a market dominated ethos is the perceived quality of support services and their effectiveness within fields of operation as outlined by Circular 9/94.

2.3 Supporting Teachers

This section will deepen the examination of the role of support teachers begun in 2.2 above by examining the nature of support, and by looking at particular aspects of the work, such as consultancy and collaborative teaching, which were regarded as a means of promoting change in classrooms and schools. It will also be useful to consider some of the wider theories of change which have occupied the educational literature over the last decade or more and which have informed my research in its planning, its implementation and analysis.

The nature of support

In section 2.2 above, the emergence of peripatetic support services from, mainly, off-site remedial reading teams was outlined. While Circular 6/94 spelt out in general headings the function of local education authority support services, there was a growing literature on special educational needs support services throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s which considered the role in more depth. As the theoretical model of special educational needs provision changed from one based on individual pupil pathology, or the psycho-medical paradigm (Clarke et al 1995), towards a socio-political paradigm, where educational inequalities based on disability are perceived to be embedded within institutions and particularly their curricula, the role of support teachers changed from working with individual pupils to one of working with teachers and schools, attempting to change attitudes towards provision and entitlement. This change has been documented by Hart (1986), Gipps, Gross and Goldstein (1986), Hegarty (1987), Booth, Potts and Swann (1987), Bowers (1989), Ainscow and Florek (1989), McLaughlin and Rouse (1991), Lacey and Lomas (1993), among others.

These studies have examined issues such as management of support services, the inadequacies of mainstream curricula, problems of support teachers working alongside classroom teachers, and problems of changing attitudes towards special educational needs within primary schools. In this study, I consider these issues but focus on the nature of the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers and the elements of this relationship which could be developed in order to enhance educational provision.

Clark et al (ibid) see the emergence of a third paradigm based on the work of, for example, Ainscow (1991) in the United Kingdom and writers in the United States such as

Skrtic (1991) and the Stainbacks (1992). This paradigm they describe as 'organisational' in that special educational needs are the results of inadequacies in the development of mainstream schools, and can be addressed through identifying which features within schools can be improved in order to enhance special needs provision. I will return to a discussion of these paradigms later, but at this stage there is enough to inform the notion that the nature of support teaching embodies the principle of changing both the attitudes and practice of classroom teachers regarding provision for children with special educational needs. The literature on educational change will be examined in the next section. I would now like to explore some other concepts of support.

The term 'support', when used to describe the role of teachers who were formerly 'remedial' teachers, could be applied to pupils or classroom teachers (Visser 1986). In this case I shall be using the term to describe the work which support teachers do with classroom teachers. The term support as a descriptor embodies a tension (Visser *ibid*): the word itself could be viewed as suggesting the maintenance of the status quo rather than the general dynamic nature of the support teaching role.

To support something is to identify with it; to encourage it; to keep it from collapsing. There is no sense of altering the status quo. It perhaps continues to reinforce the 'caring protection role' rather than the 'curriculum change' role which argues we should be moving ahead.

(Visser 1986 p. 7)

Despite Visser's reservations about the use of the term 'support' (and his preference for the term 'Teacher-Enabler') the title 'support teacher' has remained in use up to the present day to describe the peripatetic and in-school role. This role has also retained the tension of being on the one hand a form of social support and on the other hand a means of changing and improving the recipient's working practices. If we look in more detail at what these different roles embody we will see the tension more clearly.

Social support

As accounts and analyses of support teaching have built up it is possible to see some acknowledgement of the nature of support within the classroom from the point of view of human relationships. Garnett (1989), Atkinson (1991) and Thomas (1992) present perspectives on the relationship between the support teacher and the classroom teacher. Garnett (*ibid*) begins to indicate the importance of understanding the nature of the

supportive relationship between the support teacher and the classroom teacher. The interpersonal skills required will be discussed in more detail in a later section but here we should recognise supportive skills such as listening and understanding classteachers' concerns, anticipating needs, being constructive and encouraging (Garnett p.91).

Turning to the literature from a wider field of social sciences a consideration of the theory of social support can help us to see how important this factor may be in the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers. Although not necessarily aimed at professional relationships, Shumaker and Brownell's definition of social support appears to be appropriate in this case:

Social support is an exchange of resources between at least two individuals perceived by the provider or the recipient to be intended to enhance the well-being of the recipient.

(Shumaker and Brownell 1984 p.13)

The concepts of exchange and reciprocity appear to be particularly relevant to the motives and actions of not only the recipients in supportive exchanges, but also the providers. One may wish to consider the possibility that accepting a benefit may place the recipient, namely the classroom teacher, in an '*uncomfortable state of tension indebtedness*' (Shumaker and Brownell *ibid* p. 14); the recipients may wish to reduce their discomfort by rejecting help, even when it is needed, denigrate the providers, or reconceptualise their own original needs. Any concept of mutuality should also acknowledge any gain that the providers derive from the exchange, such as enhanced status, recognition of expertise, career promotion. This is a particularly useful point for the analysis of this research and will be explored during the account and analysis of data.

A useful set of points to consider when evaluating the effectiveness of social support comes from Shumaker and Brownell (*op cit*) as follows: the convergence of perceptions of the exchange by the participants; the point that even when both participants perceive the resource exchange as helpful, the actual impact on the recipient may not be so; incongruity between participants in their perceptions of how help should be offered; the inability of recipients to provide information about their needs or to possess the interpersonal skills to do so; the extent to which health-sustaining functions such as self-esteem enhancement and gratification of collegial needs are present; and the extent to which negative social interactions such as scapegoating, labelling, stereotyping and stigmatising are present. In Shinn, Lehmann and Wong's (1984) analysis of social

interaction and social support the point that support is influenced by '*stressors, personal characteristics of the recipient, and environmental conditions*' (p. 56) is particularly relevant to my research. They comment further:

It is clear that not all interpersonal encounters or their effects are positive. Other people can be sources of conflict, they can strew obstacles in one's path instead of helping one overcome them, or their well-intentioned efforts can backfire if they do not fit one's situation.....Even more interesting are the potential detrimental effects of socially supportive interactions (those perceived as beneficial by one or both parties) when the support offered does not fit the recipient's circumstances.

(Shinn, Lehmann and Wong 1984 p.56)

Considering social support as a reciprocal process Shinn et al's examination of deleterious social interactions suggests that these interactions may involve benefits and costs for the recipients and providers of support. Although providers derive satisfaction and approval for giving support, they also expend time, energy and resources. The '*Theory of Person-Environment Fit*' usefully highlights five dimensions, namely, amount, timing, source, structure and function, which can throw light on the quality of support (Shinn et al ibid). Issues such as too much support and too little challenge, lack of synchronicity, quality or type of supporter and their own hinterland, type of support such as appraisal, reassurance, emotional and so on, are helpful in considering partnerships between support teachers and classroom teachers.

Finally in this section, it is worthwhile considering the definition of social support given by Johnson and Johnson:

A social support system consists of significant others who collaboratively share people's tasks and goals, who provide individuals with resources (such as money, materials, tools, skills, information, and advice) that enhance their well-being and/or help them deal with the particular stressful situation to which they are exposed, and who help people mobilize their psychological resources in order to deal with their problems.

(Johnson and Johnson 1987 p. 433 - 434)

To what extent the support teacher would be expected to embrace this definition as a descriptor of their relationship with the classroom teacher is debatable and will inform some aspects of my analysis of the case studies of these relationships. I will return to a discussion of some of these issues in the later section on interpersonal skills. The next section examines the other aspect of the support teacher's role referred to above, that of changing and improving the practice of the classroom teacher.

2.4 Change

As previously discussed, the role of support teachers (after both the 1981 and the 1993 Education Acts) has involved advocating change in schools and classrooms and in the practice of individual teachers. This change has been focused on the provision of education for children with special educational needs but has also involved whole class and whole school issues. Not only has the advocacy of change featured in the interaction between support teacher and class teacher, but the role of the support teacher itself has undergone considerable change over the last decade. The concept of change, therefore, can be identified as an important element in this research, and will now be examined. The sections then following will further identify some specific issues from the change literature which have made a particular contribution to the planning and analysis of this research.

Background to change in education

Attempts to provide theoretical frameworks for change have occupied modern educational writing particularly since the 1960s. Here I will take an overview of educational change in order to provide a general background. Accounts of the development of change processes generally begin with the Nuffield Foundation and the Schools' Council curriculum development projects in the United Kingdom. MacDonald and Walker (1976) gave a comprehensive account of innovation models and theories up to the mid-seventies: Havelock's three models of change (Social Interaction, Research Development and Diffusion, and Problem-solving) which appeared to necessitate a degree of compliance on the part of the receiver; Donald Schon's three models for diffusion, one of which appeared to coincide with some of the philosophy underpinning the Humanities Curriculum Project (a forerunner of Stenhouse's action research movement) and which focused not only on the content of the innovation to be diffused but also on the pre-established method for its diffusion; House's problematising of Havelock's model with account taken of the need for teacher personal contact networks, and concern shown regarding diffusion systems as instruments of control. MacDonald and Walker go on to add their own analysis of and speculation on change mechanisms, with a final emphasis on replacing the term 'dissemination' with the term 'curriculum negotiation'. The general principles of change appeared to be concerned predominantly with curriculum

content at this time, although MacDonald and Walker acknowledged, with prescience, that curriculum projects aspired to ideologies of reforming the organisation of schools and the nature of education itself.

Later summaries of change and innovation in education (Horton and Raggatt 1982, Nicholls 1983, Galton and Moon 1983, for example), while recognising the continuing development of change theory, began to report more specific examples of failure to implement innovations, the concept of innovation with no change, and the replacement of unsatisfactory practices with other unsatisfactory practices. Fullan (1992) offers an analysis of educational change in North America since the 1960s in four phases: adoption (1960s), when large-scale curriculum innovations emerged; implementation failure (1970-77), when the problems of lack of sound rationales and lack of follow-through were exposed; implementation success (1978-82), when confidence grew and research evidence based on individual projects amassed; since the early eighties, when change has taken two forms, one being mainly through legislation in the form of mandated curriculum and standardised tests, for example, the other being mainly through collaborative cultures, mentoring, collegial development of school policies, for example.

It is perhaps possible to see a similar division of change mechanisms developing throughout the 1980s in the United Kingdom, and continuing to do so. The increased pressures of accountability which moved schools from change and development based on self-evaluative processes towards compulsory appraisal, action plans and, of course, a statutory curriculum (Galton and Moon 1983, Mabey and Mayon-White 1993) can be viewed alongside the smaller, but persistent, voice of the teacher as researcher movement (Elliott 1991) and those who wish to give teachers greater autonomy and professional respect, thereby ensuring constant renewal of practice (Shipman 1990, Biott and Nias 1992, Claxton 1989, Salmon 1988). The dissonance between these two different styles of working towards change was an important consideration throughout my research.

It is also echoed, with a greater degree of complexity, in much of the discussion on implementing change in provision for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools. There is a considerable amount of literature which advocates change, or rather, additions to practice at the classroom level (for example, Lewis 1996, Dean 1996, Jones and Charlton 1992 among many others) without implying any fundamental

structural deficits in teaching or institutions; other writers and researchers go further and whilst maintaining respect for and collegiality with classroom teachers, press for change in pedagogy and curriculum (Hanko 1995, Hart 1986 and 1991, McLaughlin and Rouse 1991); the most radical advocates of change view learning and physical disabilities as social constructs and challenge schools, and society in general, to change fundamentally in their approach to special educational needs (Clough and Barton 1995, Franklin 1987, Bines 1986 among others).

This section has taken a general, overall view of some of the change theorists in both mainstream and special education. I will now go on to look at more specific issues concerning change which have informed my research.

Personal Change

This research is looking at the nature of partnerships between teachers; change at a personal level seems, therefore, to be an important issue for exploration. It is, of course, necessary to place this within an understanding of institutional change mechanisms and I will address specific issues around whole-school change in the section after this one.

Personal change is never easy. For teachers, in particular, the construction of viable alternatives - other ways of doing things which seem personally consonant and valid - is likely to be especially problematic. Beleaguered, embattled, hemmed in, teachers must fight hard even to maintain things as they are, let alone find the breathing space to try out other, personally risky alternatives.

(Salmon 1988 p.124)

This quotation highlights an aspect of change which although frequently acknowledged in the educational literature as being of importance (Easen 1986, Hinson 1989, Garnett 1989, Hanko 1995, Booth et al 1992, MacIntyre 1993) has produced nowhere near as much research and writing as change on an institutional, local or national basis.

Goodson (1992), in his introductory editorial chapter to a volume on teachers' lives, points out that British research on teachers tended to move from the large scale surveys or historical analyses of the 1960s, through the case studies of the 1970s where schooling as a social process for pupils was examined and teachers were the villains, towards studies

in the early 1980s which began to pose the question of '*how teachers saw their work and their lives*' (p.4). Goodson quotes his own previous work advocating more sensitive research:

*Researchers, even when they had stopped treating the teacher as numerical aggregate, historical footnote or unproblematic role incumbent still treated teachers as interchangeable types unchanged by circumstance or time.....
'In understanding something so intensely personal as teaching it is critical we know about the person the teacher is.'*

(Goodson in Goodson (1992) p.4)

During the changes throughout political and administrative procedures in education in the 1980s and 1990s this deeper consideration and understanding of individual teachers' lives through research has become a less common phenomenon. There is nevertheless a continuing and useful literature which examines how teachers deal with change; it was also useful to turn to some of the more general literature in the field of social science in order to inform my examination of teacher partnerships.

Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) present an interesting analysis of different approaches to improving the teaching force which incorporates teacher development as knowledge and skill development, as self-understanding and as ecological change. Changing teachers through the provision of knowledge and skills is seen by Hargreaves and Fullan as an important component of the development process, but they criticise this process as being top-down, failing to involve the teacher and thereby generating resistance and not securing commitment, often being based on inappropriate, positivistic educational research which disregards the practical wisdom of the teacher, greater investment in skill development than in personal growth or the development of a supportive professional community, and more resources being allocated to the developers and trainers rather than to the recipients of training in the form of, for example, non-classroom time.

At the beginning of a discussion on teacher development as self-understanding Hargreaves and Fullan (ibid) consider the argument as to whether changes in attitudes and beliefs precede or follow changes in behaviour. This argument is also conducted within the field of social psychology where considerable research on the link between attitudes and behaviour has been conducted. Hogg and Vaughan (1995) present two aspects of this argument which throw some light onto a consideration of teacher partnership and change. Firstly, they look at using arguments to convince the recipient that a change of mind and

behaviour are appropriate, and consider research in this area which has focused on the *'nature of the message, that is, the persuasive communication which will be effective'* (p.149). Secondly, they consider the concept of finding ways to persuade people to act differently, even resorting to using tricks, or perhaps coercion; then they may come to think in a different way and will continue to carry out the desired change.

Where this discussion takes place in educational literature there appears to be a general agreement that behaviours and beliefs are closely linked together. Returning to Fullan and Hargreaves, we can see that their discussion goes on to consider the embodiment of teacher development within the process of personal development. They acknowledge some possible shortcomings of what they term humanistic approaches to teacher development: these can become self-indulgent, involving participants in relationships which may be intensive, and possibly rewarding, but cannot be replicated across the profession; they are often slow, time consuming, expensive and unpredictable; they can be seen to be a therapeutic substitute for bureaucratic control, with care 'masquerading' as control. Despite these criticisms, it seems clear that a consideration of personal development and change does provide insight into the process of professional change. Factors such as the stage of maturity reached and the concerns involved during certain life phases which may result in more caution about change; issues about promotion and possible disillusionment over failure to progress, which may produce diminishing commitment and enthusiasm in the classroom, all these contribute to the ease with which teachers take on new ideas and activities and are expounded by Fullan and Hargreaves.

Taking up the issues of caution about change, and diminishing commitment and enthusiasm, it is useful to look now at resistance to change. Marris (1986) in his seminal work on change presents the view:

Whether the change is sought or resisted, and happens by chance or design; whether we look at individuals or institutions, the response is characteristically ambivalent. The will to change has to overcome an impulse to restore the past which is equally universal. What becomes of a widow, a displaced family, a new organisation or a new way of business depends on how these conflicting impulses work themselves out, within each person and his or her relationships.
(Marris 1986 p.5)

Marris contends that *'the conservative impulse'* is accounted for by our need for confidence in the predictability of our environment and the course of events in our lives, regardless of how valid these events may be to anyone but ourselves. He suggests that

we can learn from psycho-analytic experiences how slow and difficult it is for adults to reconceptualise their approach to life no matter how difficult their original state was. Most people feel threatened if their basic assumptions and emotional attachments are questioned; if they lose the ability to predict and events become unintelligible then a sense of disorientation can take over.

Since our ability to cope with life depends on making sense of what happens to us, anything which threatens to invalidate our conceptual structures of interpretation is profoundly disruptive.

(Marris 1986 p.10)

This statement appears to be particularly useful as a way of viewing the state of mind of many of the teachers involved in change in this research.

It is interesting to examine further the concept of resistance to change. Although modernists may feel that crisis and change have become 'normalised' (Giddens 1991) it is useful to consider explanations of defensive behaviour as a way of protecting our views of ourselves and others. It is possible to find several typologies of change resistance within school staffs (Easen 1986, Whitaker 1993) using terms such as 'die-hard' or 'defender' to summarise, often in a denigrating way, a type of commonly found resistance to change within the teaching profession. Although resistance is obviously frustrating for those trying to implement change it is helpful to realise that defensive behaviour is an important tool for human use in adapting to a changing world. Harris (1963) presents a study of defences as a look at the processes that protect our conceptual systems and values, thereby maintaining stability and the means by which we make sense of the world. It is possible for battlegrounds to develop between desires to increase competence and understanding and to bolster defences, but Harris continues:

the destruction of defenses does not serve learning; instead, it increases the anxiety of the person that he will lose the more or less effective conceptual systems he has with which to understand and relate to the world, and he drops back to an even more desperate and perhaps unrealistic defense than the one destroyed. Though it may seem paradoxical, we cannot increase learning by destroying the defenses which block it.

(Harris 1963 p. 271)

Harris goes on to say that we need to create situations where people do not need to stay behind their defences, in other words, make it safe to try something new.

If we need every bit of competence we possess, we simply can't afford to give up conceptual systems which are tried but not perfect, in favor of exciting new ways of looking at things that are untested.

(Harris 1963 p. 271)

Harris also advocates the ideal learning or developmental situation as being one where personal rates of growth and learning are respected and where friends will help if difficulties occur. This ideal will be explored further during a later look at collaborative and co-operative teaching. Here it throws light on the importance of developing an understanding of the personal change processes that classroom teachers were going through in this research.

This section on personal change has considered some of the issues raised in the educational and social psychology literature which contribute to an exploration and analysis of how teachers work with other teachers with a view to changing practice. Going back to Hargreaves' and Fullan's analysis of different approaches to improving the work force, the third of their approaches was teacher development as ecological change. This involves a consideration of the context in which the development takes place and will form the starting point of the next section.

The context of change

At the time when my research was first planned, in the late 1980s, the focus on whole school change and the identification of success factors within schools was becoming more general. Rutter (1979) had produced his significant study on secondary schools: the Inner London Education Authority had authorised studies which analysed success and failure in secondary, special and primary schools (Hargreaves 1984, Fish 1985, Thomas 1985); discussion of 'whole-school' approaches towards special educational needs provision was growing (Dessent 1986, Bowers 1987, Hegarty 1987). Any analysis of change in the practice of classroom teachers has, therefore, to be seen within the context of the whole school. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) go so far as to say that the '*nature of this context can make or break teacher development efforts*' (p.13). In this section I would like to examine some of the issues which have emerged from the literature surrounding institutional change. I have considered a range of literature in terms of publication dates, as some of that published after my field work was completed has contributed to reflection on and analysis of the data.

Beginning with some of the American writing on change, Sarason (1982 and 1990) has extended his theme that despite widespread school reform there has been little evidence of large-scale successful change. His argument focuses essentially on the intractability of schools as a result of reform efforts failing to reach the organisational culture of schools. This organisational culture embodies perceptions and understandings of power, concepts which change providers must understand, such as, that power does not necessarily equate with authority and can emerge at every position in an organisation. Ball (1987), in his analysis of 'micro-politics' within schools also addresses the issue of power within the change process. He feels that systems theorists tend to overlook power and focus on authority, a focus which can be unhelpful as power is '*a more active, penetrating and flexible concept in this context,*' (p.25) and should refer to '*performance, achievement and struggle*' (p.25). Conflicts and struggles for power within institutions can often lead to negotiations, compromises or (Ball (ibid) referring to MacDonald and Walker 1976):

trade-offs in meaning, whereby fundamental value conflicts are subsumed beneath a common rhetoric to which all parties are willing to subscribe. This they call 'curriculum negotiation'. The use of rhetoric may change considerably within an institution with little impact being made on practice.

(Ball 1987 p.33)

Owens (1995), in a broad overview of what he terms ‘organisational development’, also points to the often partial, incomplete and short-term activities posing as school development, activities which are often restricted to reducing conflict or addressing other problems within the organisational culture but which have little effect on the power or organisational structure of the school. Examining research over the last twenty or so years, Owens gives a useful summary of findings on organisational development:

- success is more likely when the school staff sense a readiness to change and welcome the change project
- the beginning, or entry into, the change project is probably the most significant phase of the project and requires a skilled and experienced development consultant to avoid hidden pitfalls
- open and active support from administrators is crucial to success
- change is more likely to be helpful in a school where the staff is in substantial agreement with the goals
- a change project can be thought of as consisting of four main phases: 1. entry 2. diagnosis of organisational problems 3. institutionalisation 4. maintenance

(from Owens 1995 p.235)

These points also match Sarason’s (1982) caveats about change, namely, a consideration of who has formulated the goals of change, the constraints of timing and a wariness over the expectation of a linear progression of change with a tidy finish. He also highlights an important point in an education system with ever-increasing financial constraints: that the quality and quantity of resources available to support change are a very important factor in terms of success, and that these resources have to be perceived by others as having strength or power.

Two decades later, Hargreaves (1994) also considers the issue of time within his wider analysis of change. He begins eloquently:

*Time is the enemy of freedom. Or so it seems to teachers. Time presses down the fulfilment of their wishes. It pushes against the realization of their wants. Time compounds the problem of innovation and confounds the implementation of change. It is central to the formation of teacher’s work.....
Time structures the work of teaching and is in turn structured through it. Time is therefore more than a minor organisational contingency, inhibiting or facilitating management’s attempts to bring about change. Its definition and imposition form*

part of the very core of teachers' work and of the policies and perceptions of those who administer it.

(Hargreaves 1994 p. 95)

He goes on to identify and analyse different dimensions of time and implications for teachers' work and change. Within his four interrelated dimensions, technical-rational time, micropolitical time, phenomenological time and sociopolitical time, I have found insights which have been very helpful in reflecting on my own research and I will discuss some of them here. The technical-rational dimension sees time as an objective variable which can *'be managerially manipulated in order to foster the implementation of educational changes whose purpose and desirability have been determined elsewhere'* (p.96) thus enabling change agents to allocate the use of teacher time towards effecting the desired outcome. Within this dimension Hargreaves considers the concepts of other researchers such as Campbell (1985) who identified four kinds of time used to carry out and support change: *group time*, a voluntary and moral commitment for after-school, collaborative planning; *snatched time*, or rushed consultation with teachers during the day; *personal time*, for out of school planning, course attendance, individual reading; *other contact time*, such as preparation time, away from the class, very rare in British primary schools.

Within the dimension of micropolitical time there is a consideration of the relationship between the amount of time spent away from the class and the status of the teachers. Primary teachers view the essence of their work as being within the classroom, all other activities being peripheral. As Hargreaves states:

Time away from this fundamental core commitment to plan, prepare, evaluate and consult is as much an indicator of status and power which permits the teacher concerned to be 'away', as it is of any specific educational need.

(Hargreaves 1994 p.99)

Higher up the hierarchy of power within educational institutions one moves further away from the classroom and thus, headteachers, and, I would add, advisory, support teachers and in some cases, in-school co-ordinators, have more time which is not in direct contact with a class of children. Hargreaves views this difference in time available from a micropolitical perspective in that the two traditions of teaching, namely the female-dominated primary sector and the male-dominated secondary tradition, have given rise to

inequity in parity and status within the profession, the lack of planning and preparation time being one of the outcomes.

The main points that arose for me from the dimension of phenomenological time were firstly, that of the structuration of time and the subjective element therein; secondly, the pressures and anxieties shown by teachers because of excessive time demands made by change agents; thirdly, the concepts of *monochronic* time, where people operate in a linear progression through a set of discrete stages, and *polychronic* time where people concentrate on doing several things at once, in combination, which is, I consider, a useful description of primary class teachers. The sociopolitical dimension of time involves an analysis of the ways in which teachers' work and change processes are controlled.

Hargreaves posits the notion that as administrators or change agents are separated from the classroom and its '*densely packed complexity, its pressing immediacy*' they see it from the point of view of the change they are trying to implement '*and on which their own career reputations may also depend*', and this change stands out for them from all the other events and pressures of the classroom. As change agents see the classroom *monochronically* rather than *polychronically* they see change as taking place too slowly, whereas classroom teachers find the pace of change too rapid. Within this dissonance a paradox is identified by Hargreaves:

The quicker and more 'unrealistic' the implementation timeline, the more the teacher tries to stretch it out. The more the teacher slows the implementation process down, the more impatient the administrator becomes and the more inclined he or she becomes to quicken the pace or tighten the timelines still further, or to impose yet another innovation, one more attempt to secure change. This adds still further pressures and complexities to the teacher's polychronic world, inducing yet more tendencies to slow down the pace of these additional requirements! And so on! And so on!

(Hargreaves 1994 p.108)

A second concept which is developed within the sociopolitical time dimension is that of *colonization*, or the process whereby change agents take up or *colonize* teachers' time with their own purposes. Here, Hargreaves develops Goffman's ideas of 'front regions' and 'back regions' and the part they played in occupations which dealt with the public. In teaching terms, the 'front regions' would be the teacher working in the classroom, where performance is carefully regulated: the 'back regions' would be where relaxation and stress relief took place, in the staffroom, or even in the classroom when the children had gone. This issue of personal time was viewed as very important in

Hargreaves' research and *colonization* took place when the change agent, or headteacher, imposed on or tried to control the 'back regions'.

In this section on the context of change I have highlighted issues which appear to be relevant to a consideration of developments within the work of support teachers. There is a considerable, growing literature on the management of organisational change and the current burgeoning amount of writing on the school effectiveness and improvement movements will be examined partly in the final section of this chapter as a synoptic process, and additionally in the final chapter of the thesis. I now move on to a consideration of the means of change.

2.5 Consultancy, collaborative teaching, in-service education, interpersonal skills

In the last two sections, where I have examined some of the literature and theories surrounding change processes in schools, I have used the terms change agent, change provider and support teacher as ways to describe those implementing change with teachers in classrooms. I now wish to consider some of the research and theory underlying processes whereby support teachers have attempted to carry out change in schools, namely consultancy, collaborative teaching and in-service education. There is, of course, an overlapping element between these processes. Closely connected to the facility with which they are carried out is the degree to which interpersonal skills are developed within teachers and this is the focus of the last part of this section.

Consultancy

During the 1980s a growing literature (Bowers 1987, Dessent 1986, Hegarty 1987) appeared to reach a consensus, with varying degrees of approval, that the role of the special educational needs support teacher, as well as giving direct support to children, embraced elements of a consultant and collaborative teaching role. In his account of the change in the role of support teachers Bowers (1989) provides an interesting definition and critique of consultancy. He presents a working definition as a *'helping relationship which is provided by individuals or groups who have a particular range of skills'* (p.35). These skills should help those with whom they work to increase their effectiveness and to understand their own work more clearly. Bowers identifies an interesting tension in the role in that whereas a consultant has to attempt to achieve results, through other people, he or she has no formal powers over the people involved. In other words, the consultant may be perceived not so much as a manager, rather more as a sort of counsellor, thus reflecting a humanistic value system. Bowers believes, however, that counselling skills are only one part of the consultant role and provides a more precise definition:

Basically it is what occurs when one person is asked to influence the behaviour or actions of an individual, group or organisation, but has no direct power to make changes or put programmes into action.

(Bowers 1989 p.36)

Aubrey (1990) sees the consultant and client *'in a confidential, collaborative relationship'* (p.3) which has been initiated by the client who has total freedom to accept or reject the consultant's services. This would not, perhaps, be the most apt definition in the case of my research as there is little evidence of voluntarism on the part of the clients.

Aubrey's further comments on the consultant role are helpful, however, particularly the list of consultant goals:

1. offer an objective point of view
 2. help to increase problem-solving skills
 3. help extend the client's freedom of choice in action
 4. support the client in choices made
 5. increase the client's awareness of the resources available to deal with persistent problems
- (Aubrey 1990 from p. 3)

She also goes on to identify some aspects of the consultant-client relationship, which involves clarifying the problem for which the consultant has been engaged; together deciding the exact nature of the consultant's task and what and how it should be accomplished; establishing the roles and commitments during the task, whilst allowing for flexibility. Aubrey recommends a direct contract between the consultant and the organisation, and feels that the consultant must know who holds the real power for decision making within the school, that is, head teacher, governors, local authority, and who has the main investment in the success or failure of the task. Aubrey writes from a systems approach and sees the stages of consultancy as a linear model of problem-identification, problem analysis, plan implementation, problem evaluation, or a five-stage model of entry, diagnosis, action, planning, implementation and termination. This apparently straightforward analysis of the role does not take into account the complications suggested within the literature on change considered in the sections above.

Golby and Fish (1990) suggest that the term consultancy could be used to describe a wide range of practices in education which had grown over the previous decade but that it was still difficult to provide a precise theoretical rationale. They were particularly interested in the process of consultancy which was educational, rather than coercive or managerial. They present a critique of what they term the '*Red Adair consultant*' who produces quick results in an emergency, displaying his technical effectiveness in '*capping the problem*', with ownership of the results belonging to the management, having provided a service where the professionals could not cope for themselves. This metaphor is particularly helpful in reflecting on the beginning of my first case study where support teachers were originally expected to perform in just such a role. There is also a critique of the view of consultancy linked to the practices of therapy, as, here, the emphasis is on rehabilitation

through self-knowledge and self-help which implies some idea of proper or normal functioning. Golby and Fish feel that although this view of consultancy is preferable to the 'expert' view as it does acknowledge the importance of process in learning, it does bring into question the issues of value and principle, namely, towards whose view of *'proper or normal education would an educational consultant be working? The therapeutic metaphor is silent in this area, which is inescapable for the educational consultant'* (p.192).

Golby and Fish go on to offer a very useful set of features which any consultancy process must acknowledge:

1. the limitations of 'bought-in' expertise
2. the learned helplessness induced by dependence on outside authority
3. the legitimacy of the public interest, at the very least in knowing about and influencing teachers' activities
4. the independence of teachers and consultant in some central aspects of their professional work
5. the importance of distinguishing a 'course' from a 'consultancy'
6. the significance of different perspectives and interest, all of which need to be taken into account
7. the need to work with contending views of the consultancy process itself.

(Golby and Fish 1990 from p. 195)

They continue to suggest that there are several metaphors which can be applied to educational consultancy, such as expert, therapist, ambassador, chairman, priest, counsellor, architect, and which need exploration.

To summarise this section on consultancy I would like to refer again to Golby and Fish where they emphatically state that *'each and every practice must find its own identity in its own setting'* (p. 198). They also feel that educational consultancy is expanding and in the last few years there has certainly been a growth of local authority based, and nation-wide consultants offering a range of knowledge and skills. The notion of consultancy certainly matches the ethos of the 'market' and is an important consideration for the support teachers who now have to sell their services to clients.

Collaborative teaching

In a fairly recent report on special educational needs in mainstream schools for the Department for Education, Clarke, Dyson, Millward and Skidmore (1995) examined collaborative working as a feature of innovatory practice. They looked at internal collaboration, particularly the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator, and at external collaboration with regard to partnerships between schools and local education authority services. If we go back twenty or more years we see collaborative teaching also being reviewed as innovatory practice. Ferguson and Adams (1982) provided a critique of team teaching in remedial education, focusing specifically on the remedial teacher's role. (This appeared in the journal 'Remedial Education' before the term support teacher had become more usual.) They looked at the adoption of collaborative teaching processes in Grampian, a change which resulted from the 1978 Scottish HMI report on special educational needs. Although limited to secondary school subject teaching, their research raised some interesting challenges for the concept of collaborative teaching. The difficulties of joint preparation, or even of the remedial teacher being able to find out what was about to happen in the lesson, the impossibility of displaying expertise in a wide range of subjects, the tension over who took the main role in the classroom, and the perception by the pupils of the remedial teacher as a classroom assistant, were all issues which emerged from the study. Much of the writing about support services in the 1980s and early 1990s has been less critical and appeared to take for granted the role of the in-class, collaborative supporting teacher (Bowers 1989, Clough and Lindsay 1991, Hart 1992).

More recently, the assumption that another adult in a classroom can automatically benefit pupils with special educational needs has been challenged. Thomas (1992) and Lacey and Lomas (1993) provide several issues of concern when two adults are working together in class: considerable skill and sensitivity is required to work with class teachers who are used to autonomy; the fear of being judged on the part of classroom teachers and the fear of performing in front of another adult; possible personality clashes and clashes over ideologies of teaching, control of pupils, curriculum content; more time needed for joint preparation. Thomas (ibid) places his analysis within a general view that collaboration is not a '*natural thing for teachers to do in the classroom*' (p.31) and refers to previous research on team teaching and open-plan schools which seem to have given rise to problems such as the absence of personal space and the threat towards many

teachers' sense of personal territory. Thomas also refers to Hargreaves' (1980) findings that teachers were extremely sensitive to observation when teaching, and that the idea of territory whilst appearing to be almost a psycho-biological need, could also be seen as a defence strategy which participants in a classroom team may adopt. Thomas (ibid), including parents, non-teaching assistants, advisors within classroom teams, summarises the issues which might detract from the effectiveness of working relationships. He feels that mismatches or tensions may be '*managerial, interpersonal, ideological, definitional, practical or personal*' (p.53), as well as problems due to the participants' feelings of marginality.

Biott (1991 and 1992) has also looked closely at the effectiveness of advisory and support teachers and their working relationships with classroom teachers. He identified several problems within the partnership: the problem of imposition on the class teacher through managerial processes; the possibility that class teachers appear to accept the support and suggestions of the advisory teacher but carry on working as always, on the understanding that it is unlikely that advisory teachers would wish to create an embarrassing situation, thereby creating an unspoken truce; the problem of 'symbolic agreements' when joint planning is carried out away from the classroom between people who have little time and have different interests and priorities, but tacitly mask or defer any potential disagreements and the partners engage in 'parallel working'; fitting into existing work patterns and value systems.

So far I have mostly addressed the problems of collaborative teaching which have been highlighted in research published during the 1990s. These must, of course, be located within a wider consideration of the implementation of change, an issue considered in earlier sections. At an earlier stage, when my data collection was being planned and implemented, some writers (Bowers 1989, Andrews 1987) appeared to see in-class, collaborative teaching as somewhat of a panacea with regard to educational provision for children special needs, while others (Bines 1986, Gipps, Gross and Goldstein 1987) were beginning to acknowledge the complexity of the relationships between classroom teachers and support teachers. Hart (1991) comments:

We have paid most attention to the opportunities for professional learning and development engendered through this [collaborative] process. We have barely begun to explore the processes by which teaching and learning are enhanced through collaboration from within the particular boundaries decided upon.

Advisory and support teachers have long known that facilitating professional development involves far more than simply passing on to colleagues knowledge and skills derived from their own successful classroom practice. The nature of the processes of interaction through which new understandings and skills are developed, and the conditions for professional learning needed to support them, are important areas for further investigation.

(Hart 1991 p.56)

In-service education

In-service education, or INSET as it is commonly called, has developed in importance and volume over the last ten to fifteen years as a means of teacher development and change. The move from voluntary attendance at courses in teachers' centres or institutions of higher education to compulsory attendance for whole days in schools has generated a wealth of packages and independent consultancies, as well as in-school training for the trainers. The considerable changes in special educational needs legislation and provision, and particularly as far as this research is concerned the move towards increased retention of children with special needs in mainstream schooling, resulted in many courses being provided at centres and colleges (Robson, Sebba, Mittler and Davies 1988). During the 1980s, even before 'Baker' days and compulsory in-service activities, many support services saw their role as encompassing staff development and in-service training, usually after school or for a brief period during lunch time (Sayer and Jones 1985, Freeman and Gray 1989).

Southworth (1984) presents some interesting reflections on the notion of staff development, of which in-service education is generally seen as the main part. He feels that we must consider staff development as education, rather than training, and apply educational principles about learning, looking at the contexts and activities which form the teacher's daily reality, examining what teachers are doing and trying to do in their own classrooms, recognising the teacher's professional autonomy. Southworth feels that development should be less concerned with what the in-service providers consider should be happening. He goes on to consider research which highlighted the rooted individualism of teachers and the spasmodic contact with colleagues, their self-reliance and autonomy and the high degree of professional isolation. These factors produce problems which could be seen to stand in the way of effective development: there is a lack of professional discourse and *'teachers do not have a shared, technical language with which to discursively analyse their experiences'*; schools are seen as having cultures where

there are few vehicles for discussion, observation and communication. Creating whole-school, in-service sessions would appear to be a process which required a great deal of sensitivity, contextual knowledge and established credibility on the part of the in-service providers. It continues to be a skill which plays an increasing part in the life of most teachers, as Clark et al report:

Since effective teaching and learning for pupil diversity appears not to require a new technology of teaching, it is probable that much professional development will focus on the enhancement of existing teaching skills and strategies. For all of these reasons, professional development strategies will need to range beyond traditional models of INSET delivery and will be largely managed and provided from the school's own resources.

(Clark, Dyson, Millward and Skidmore 1995 p.78)

Interpersonal skills

Within education there has been increasing acknowledgement that teamwork and interpersonal communication are important goals for pupils, and within teacher education it has also been recognised that communicating effectively with adults is as important as communicating with children (Claxton 1989, Nias et al 1989, Harland 1992, Fish). In any examination of professional relationships between support and classroom teacher it is necessary to look at the degree to which open communication and effective conflict resolution are possible. Lacey and Lomas (1993) cite Gilmore et al (1974) whose study of health teams found that the most common method of dealing with difficulties was to reduce communication between team members, thus evading any attempt at problem solving. Lacey and Lomas feel that teachers are often unable to separate interpersonal and interprofessional relations, and that due to lack of training, disagreements and conflicts can be magnified without resolution. This lack of training applies both to classroom teachers and to advisory and support teachers.

It is useful here to consider the concept of social interaction and social skills as these two factors appear to comprise such a large proportion of the role of support teaching. This links back to some of the concepts already explored in my earlier section on social support. Burton and Dumbleby (1988 and 1995) summarise management of social interactions and negotiations of meanings as being characterised by: language; non-verbal behaviour such as paralanguage, posture, proximity and use of space, facial expression, gaze and eye-contact, gestures and body movement, clothes and appearance; relationship of participants, adopted roles and attitudes to each other and mutual

perceptions; social context, physical place, atmosphere, cultural expectations and definitions of situation (from p. 92).

In terms of the ways in which support teachers interact with classroom teachers it is interesting to explore some of these concepts a little further. For instance, critical points in use of language are the opening and closing moments of an interaction. These can determine how informal/formal, positive/negative, friendly/hostile the interaction will be. The register used will vary as to the kind of relationship being established with other people. Personal communication styles will contribute towards the role which is deemed appropriate for a particular situation and relationship. If we move on to considering relationships, social exchange theory suggests that people form relationships on the basis of reward and gain (Burton and Dimpleby op cit). One may feel that this applies only to voluntary, personal relationships but literature on consultancy skills (Lippit and Lippit 1986) and team building (Johnson and Johnson 1987, Reddy and Jamison 1988, Nias and Southworth 1989) also stresses the importance of these 'soft skills'.

In the early 1970s, a seminal piece of research by McBer and Company (account in Spencer 1983) was carried out in order to contribute towards the selection and assessment procedures for the United States Junior Foreign Service. The competences which were identified as discriminating the superior from the average officers were 'soft skills' such as non-verbal empathy, or the ability to 'hear' what someone from a foreign culture was really meaning in negotiation; the ability to identify who really held the power in any situation; positive expectations or a strong belief in the worth of people who were different from oneself, and the ability to maintain this positive outlook under stress. I mention this here as later writers on education (Elliott 1991) have used the McBer findings extensively to develop further the proposition that soft skills play an important consideration in judging teacher competences.

Finally, in this section, McLaughlin (1991 p.81) reminds us that:

Working with people involves emotion and messiness. It is not a neat, linear process which one can follow through step by step without deviation. It involves the notion of interdependence and effective interpersonal communication involves acceptance of this. It is to accept that my actions will affect your response and so on. Therefore, it is necessary for the adviser to take seriously the notion of self awareness of style and mode of communication in order to know how this affects the responses of others.

2.6 Conclusion

To conclude the chapter I identify themes which emerged from this review of the literature and which contributed towards my planning of the study, data collection and analysis. In Chapter 6, these themes will be reviewed in synthesis with themes emerging from the data.

Clarity of definition

Within the literature on special educational needs it is possible to identify ambiguities and some lack of clarity about approaches to educational provision. During the decade before this research began, for the first time, sustained questions were being put about the concept of special educational needs and about the nature of educational provision for children who were thus described (HMI Report Scotland 1979, Tomlinson 1982, among others). It appears, therefore, from the literature that support teachers were placed at the cusp of at least two approaches towards educating children with special needs, one being the traditional medical (or psychological) model of individual treatment, withdrawal and remediation, another being the educational model of ensuring that curriculum and pedagogy were appropriate within the child's setting. I do not wish to lose sight of broader, sociological, political or economic issues, which can give explanations for current educational provision. To address these in detail would, however, take the remit of this thesis beyond the boundaries set by my consideration of the micro-issues of the support teacher and class teacher relationship.

I would like to mention, however, in relation to this theme that during the 1980s the level of debate about special educational needs was intensified, as exemplified by Barton's (1988) introduction to a volume of essays challenging existing assumptions. Examples of criticisms of these assumptions stemmed from sociological (Tomlinson 1982, Ford et al 1982) and from educational psychological (Booth 1985, Galloway 1985) viewpoints. Barton (ibid) moves the argument from an issue of needs to one of rights, thus stepping into the political arena and stating the necessity for a '*critical analysis of power, control, vested interests, choice and decision-making*' (p.6). In my exploration of support teacher - class teacher relationships the awareness of conflicting paradigms of special educational needs which emerged from the literature became a marker for my planning and analysis.

Initiation

Moving on from definitions and understanding of the general theoretical context, an important theme within the literature can be summed up by initiation. Fullan (1992) uses this word in application to innovation projects and the nature of their beginnings in schools, 'the process leading up to and including the decision to proceed with implementation' (p.50). He appears to be suggesting that while it is not possible to evaluate the initiation process in isolation, nevertheless, there are certain questions which must be put when considering this aspect of a change process. Questions concerned with the run-in time for starting, size of change to aim for, internal development or imported external innovations (p.62) are just some of those which would be useful in any kind of evaluative process.

Fullan considers initiation with regard to a project as a whole. In terms of support teaching, the rationale for initiating relationships with schools is provided within the background to the changing model of special educational needs (section 2.3 above). Within each of these whole-school relationships, or projects as Fullan might call them, it is possible to identify from the literature factors which may affect the quality of the many subsequent initiations with classroom teachers and children. These beginnings are not unproblematic as we can see from Ferguson and Adams (1982) among others. Both in accounts of support teachers as change agents, and in the more general literature on change, we encounter issues which appear to be of importance in any consideration of support teacher - class teacher relationships. Precedence of change in behaviour or attitudes (Hargreaves and Fullan 1992), orientation of approach (Hogg and Vaughan 1995) when first entering the relationship, styles of personal communication (Burton and Dimbleby 1988 and 1995) are examples of useful criteria for examining the role of support teachers during the initiation of a change process.

Change

Within Chapter 2 I have examined the concept of Change in terms of the Background to change in education, Personal change and the Context of change. I have also examined the means whereby support teachers might act as change agents, namely, consultancy, collaborative teaching, in-service education and interpersonal skills. The use of these sub-titles within the main body of this chapter indicates an initial organisation of the literature into sections which I consider relevant to the research.

Examining the broader literature, it is possible to identify some tensions within possible definitions of relationships between change agents or supporting agents and their recipients (section 2.3 above). I am aware that I am using the term change agent and supporting agent interchangeably here but that elision perhaps represents one of the dilemmas facing support teachers. Visser (1986) points out that the word support can be seen as suggesting maintenance of the status quo rather than promoting change or moving ahead. Tensions also exist in attempts to define a consultancy relationship, a term which has been increasingly applied to support teachers (Bowers 1986, Andrews 1992, among others). Consultants can be expected to demonstrate soft skills, such as those of counselling, which reflect a humanistic value system (Bowers 1989); they are also expected to influence or change the behaviour or actions of individuals, groups or organisations without having direct power (Aubrey 1990). Golby and Fish (1990) also ask us to consider metaphors which can be applied to educational consultancy, such as, expert, therapist, ambassador, chairman, priest, counsellor, architect.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) highlight what they see as possible shortcomings in humanistic approaches to teacher development and change. These approaches might equate with the therapist, priest, or counsellor, metaphors referred to in the previous paragraph. These they see as possibly becoming self-indulgent, and involving participants in relationships which may be intensive, and possibly rewarding, but cannot be replicated across the profession. In terms of my research, when considering the relationships and change, I would prefer to keep in mind the importance of personal development within the change process, as presented over forty years ago by Jersild (1955) and taken up more recently by Salmon (1988), Claxton (1989) and Nias (1989).

Expertise and theoretical understanding

An extensive literature (p.14-18 above) looked at the changing model of support teaching. A theme which emerges at this point is that support teachers needed to be very certain of the theory behind their own espoused model(s) in order to disseminate practice successfully within classrooms. From the section on the development of support teaching (2.2 above) we can see that expertise in the area of teaching reading and in the teaching of children with a variety of special educational needs appears to have been the prime requisite for those in such roles. Less overtly acknowledged in the literature, but emanating from an examination of the requirements of consultants and collaborative teachers, is the need for expertise in relationship skills (p. 34-35, 42-43 above).

Ambivalence towards exposition of their own expertise on the part of supporting agents can be identified. On the one hand there is the wish to enhance one's own status for reasons of professional ambition and enhancement of self-esteem while on the other hand there is the desire for teamwork and reciprocity which would not necessarily be strengthened by an open display of expertise (Shumaker and Brownell 1984, Claxton 1989 and Nias 1989).

Linking back to the first theme identified from this literature chapter, clarity of definition, it is possible to detect certain assumptions that support teachers understood and embraced the proposed model of integrated provision for children with special educational needs, and were theoretically and practically equipped to disseminate these changes to class teachers. Although the ambivalence of class teachers towards the inclusion of all children into mainstream schooling is taken for granted, similar ambivalence on the part of some support teachers does not seem to be acknowledged..

Conclusion

In Chapter 6 this preliminary discussion of themes which emerged from the literature will be linked with themes which emerge from the case study accounts. At this stage I feel that I have indicated some of the issues which informed my thinking both during the early stages of the research and during the analysis and writing of the thesis.

Chapter 3

The Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the methodological context for the research carried out, and a critique of the methods chosen within this context. To support the subsequent sections there is, firstly, a brief outline of my approach to the research, with a particular emphasis on the means of collecting data. This section is followed by a discussion of the research paradigm in which my work is located, and then by a specific critique of evaluation and case study in terms of appropriateness to this research. The chapter goes on to examine the research methods used, namely, observation and field notes, interviewing and questionnaires, with a brief consideration of documentary analysis. The final section presents some details of the actual approaches used.

3.1 Outline of the research

This research took the form of two evaluative case studies, with the overall aim of exploring the nature of partnership between support teachers and classroom teachers, based on the questions given on page 4 above. The data collection for the first case study lasted for fourteen months and consisted of observation, interviews and questionnaires, carried out mainly within one junior school, with some interviews and observations taking place in the support service centre base. There were four support teachers involved in a project set up to develop the curriculum, after some very critical inspectorial reports. The school was located within a north London borough where I had been employed as a support teacher, and latterly as acting head of the support service. My knowledge of the education authority and its personnel was extensive although previous knowledge of the school was through hearsay. As my role of acting head ended, I was able to spend two days a week in the school during the autumn term. I then changed jobs and spent one day a week in the school concerned for the rest of the academic year.

The second case study began a year later and lasted for one academic year. This took place in two divisions of a county in southern England. Here the nature of partnership between support teachers and classroom teachers was explored through observing four support teachers in their work, focusing on one particular school in each case. As well as observations, interviews were conducted with support teachers, classroom teachers, headteachers and some children. The same research questions (page 4 above) formed the basis of the enquiry. The major part of the field work took place during the first term of this year when I accompanied each support teacher for one or two days a week over a half term period. At the end of the academic year I returned for two half-day visits with each support teacher, when I interviewed the headteachers and some of the classroom teachers.

This brief outline of the research sets the scene for the following sections where the research methods are placed within a wider discussion in order to justify my choice of methodological approach.

3.2 The research paradigm

This section of the chapter discusses the paradigm in which my research is located. First of all, there is a brief look at the background to current debates on methodology followed by an examination of the paradigm which provides the perspective for my approach to the research. I will consider the aspect of my methodology which forms a match with this paradigm in the latter part of this section. Any look at current methodological approaches is incomplete without a look at the history and background, and the arguments surrounding the adoption of different styles of educational research. Although it appears no longer to be necessary to argue the case for using a non-positivist methodological approach, it is helpful to look at the emergence of this form of educational enquiry.

It is useful to consider the different philosophical approaches to research which underpin positivist and interpretive approaches. A brief look at the history of positivism and the styles of research which have emanated from this philosophical stance could take us from nineteenth century French philosophy in the form of Auguste Comte, through the behavioural psychologists of the mid-twentieth century to more recent examples of experiments and quasi-experiments (Cohen and Manion, 1989). On the whole, the standpoint of these researchers would be to view social phenomena in much the same way

as physical phenomena, and look to observation and experiment as the means to advance knowledge.

A brief consideration of alternatives to positivistic research would see a rejection of:

...the belief that human behaviour is governed by general laws and characterised by underlying regularities. Moreover, they would agree that the social world can only be understood from the standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated.

(Cohen and Manion, 1989, p.27)

Within this approach, which is labelled interpretive, we could include a range of methodologies which are commonly used in educational research today, such as open-ended enquiry involving grounded theory, action research, and case study. As Ely (1991) comments many terms are used almost synonymously in discussion of research methodology. She goes on to point out, however, that:

Underlying this collection of competing labels are certain commonalities that link them together - a network of underlying principles and philosophical beliefs that constitute a paradigm or world view...Those who work within the naturalistic paradigm operate from a set of axioms that hold realities to be multiple and shifting, that take for granted a simultaneous mutual shaping of knower and known, and that see all inquiry, including the empirical, as being inevitably value-bound.

(Ely, 1991, p.2)

Looking further for support in presenting the underlying paradigm for this research, it would be possible to explore the interpretive paradigm in terms of emancipatory and feminist research (Lather 1986, Mac an Ghaill and Dunne 1991), or action research (Elliott 1991) or examine some of the wider philosophical debates as to its applicability (Hammersley 1993). I consider, however, that these debates only apply tangentially to my own research. More to the point here is a consideration of Guba and Lincoln's (1989) approach to evaluation, 'fourth generation evaluation', and the degree to which their extensive analysis of a constructivist paradigm elucidates the articulation of my own paradigm.

Guba and Lincoln begin by explaining what they see as interesting properties of fourth generation evaluation: (i) that evaluation outcomes are not immutable facts but emerge from an interactive process that includes the evaluator; in other words, they are constructions rather than realities; (ii) there is the recognition that these constructions

are not value-free, and that the constructors, or participants in the research, will bring what may be multiple values to the process; (iii) these constructions are embedded in the context (physical, psychological, social, cultural) from which they emerge and on which they are commenting; (iv) the question of who has the power over the release of the final information must be carefully considered in view of the possible disempowerment of the stakeholders; (v) as outcomes of the evaluation process imply recommendations for action it is important to agree on this action through negotiation, with the evaluator being the 'orchestrator of the negotiation process' and not merely the 'technician-gathering-information' (p.10); (vi) a consideration of ethical issues should, as well as the conventional aspects such as fully informed consent, privacy/confidentiality and the like. welcome the participants as 'equal partners in every aspect of design, implementation, interpretation, and resulting action..' (p.11), ensuring that these participants are treated as human beings and not the subject of scientific experiment.

These properties as specified by Guba and Lincoln certainly form an ideal to which I aspired in carrying out my own research. As will be seen later in this chapter, (and in a later section reflecting on the research process) these aspirations were sometimes clouded by the need for expediency and by changes within the context of the research. A later examination of the constructivist paradigm, also called by Guba and Lincoln the naturalistic, hermeneutic or interpretive paradigm, throws more light on the thinking which surrounded my choice of methodology, and methods of research. The ontological assumptions, in terms of the constructivist paradigm, are that there are multiple, socially constructed realities which are not controlled by natural laws in the sense of scientific phenomena and that 'truth' is defined 'as simply that most informed and sophisticated construction on which there is a consensus among individuals most competent (not necessarily most powerful) to form such a construction (p.86). Whilst I feel that it may be possible to criticise this approach at its most extreme as solipsism, it certainly matches my own experience, in that encompassing different realities was something I expected when planning this research on partnership between teachers with different agenda.

Moving on to a consideration of epistemology, within the constructivist paradigm, when considering the relationship between the researcher and the subject(s) of the research, it is possible to assert that the inevitable interaction between the two contributes to the outcome of the research, and that the values of the researcher cannot be eliminated. Indeed, these values must also contribute to the research through choice of theoretical

background, choice of methodology and methods, and so on, as must the values of those participating in the research. Again, relating this to my own experience, in the account of the research it will be possible to see how the relationships between the support teachers and myself were affected by my own previous work as a support teacher and that chosen foci for observation or interview were influenced by what I perceived as important concerns. I feel that this interaction enriched both the process of data gathering in terms of being able to identify more deeply with the support role, and data analysis in terms of being able to jettison more decisively what may have been false trails. I will refer to this later when I begin to offer analysis of the case studies.

Guba and Lincoln (ibid) link the methodological question closely with epistemological questions. They feel that a relativist and interactive epistemology leads to a methodology which takes into account the constructions of the participants, and that analysis of these constructions brings about a reconsideration of previous positions. This methodology is styled '*the hermeneutic dialectic process*' in that it is interpretive and '*represents a comparison and contrast of divergent views with a view to achieving a higher-level synthesis of them all...*' (p. 149). There is no implication that consensus must be achieved and bearing this in mind, it is possible to locate the methodology of this thesis within such a paradigm. The conditions stipulated for a successful hermeneutic process, such as a commitment to integrity, minimal competence on the part of all participants to communicate, a willingness to share power, a willingness to change, a willingness to reconsider value positions if appropriate, a willingness to make the commitments of the time and energy required, were to a large degree fulfilled within the focus of the evaluation. The extent to which these were effected is, of course, the subject of the account in the following chapters.

In the final part of this section on the research paradigm it is useful to consider the set of entry conditions which Guba and Lincoln (ibid) require to be met before any inquiry worthy of the name of constructivist can be undertaken (p.174). The first requirement is for the research to be carried out in a natural setting, a consequence of the relativist epistemology and the necessity to take account of multiple realities. In terms of my own research this is certainly the case as participants are observed in their own settings. The second requirement is that the researcher does not begin the inquiry with a preconceived framework of what questions to ask but 'typically faces the prospect of not knowing what it is they don't know' (p.175). To some extent this ignores the assumption that

researchers bring their own values and biases into the research, which Guba and Lincoln acknowledge is unavoidable. In my own case, researching in an area of education in which I had been a participant for several years inevitably meant that I had developed an internal agenda of questions. I feel, however, that in both case studies this agenda was reframed, and that the conclusions of the thesis indicate, I hope, that the voyage of discovery advocated by Guba and Lincoln was undertaken.

The third requirement is concerned with the research instruments used, in that qualitative methods appear to be more appropriate for working with humans by humans in terms of 'talking to people, observing their activities, reading their documents....' (p.176).

Quantitative methods are not precluded as it is not the polarity between quantitative and qualitative methods which underpins the constructivist paradigm. In my case interviews and observations, with some documentary analysis, are the means of data collection and would appear to fit this requirement. The fourth and final requirement concerns the use of tacit knowledge, with a reference to Polanyi (1966). To some extent this appears to complement the second requirement, in that the constructivist researcher brings their tacit knowledge to bear on the investigation and the analysis of the data. In this requirement it appears to be advantageous that my own tacit knowledge, generated from my experience within the subject for inquiry, could be applied throughout the research. Having considered these four requirements I will now go on to look at more specific research methodology questions, and at research instruments. The next section will discuss the methodological approach taken within my chosen paradigm.

3.3 The Research Approach: evaluation and case study

This section of the methodology chapter discusses my own choice of a case study approach as a means of evaluating the nature of partnership within the changing roles of support teachers in two local education authorities. I intend to examine the background to the development of different models of evaluation and in particular to consider case study as an appropriate means of illuminating the issues involved in my own research.

In the past, much educational evaluation has been undertaken in the interests of management and policy makers, using outside evaluators and consultants, with little acknowledgement of the participants in education, namely, pupils, parents and teachers (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995). Style of evaluation has been influenced by paradigm decisions as discussed in the previous section (Guba and Lincoln op cit). An interesting history of evaluation in which it is possible to identify changing models within changing paradigms is provided by Madaus, Scriven and Stufflebeam (1983). They place the beginnings of evaluation 150 years ago, considerably pre-dating the often perceived origins in the 1960s in the United States of America. Their account of evaluation in Great Britain and the U.S.A. includes a look at the considerable influence of Tyler, insofar as he coined the term 'educational evaluation'. He was also regarded as the main proponent of formal measurement of behaviourally defined educational objectives, thus being firmly located within a positivist paradigm.

It is not pertinent here to give great detail of the evolution of the evaluation movement; it is useful, however, to consider approaches which were seminal in their influence on current styles of evaluation. In the late 1960s, and mainly in the 1970s, Robert Stake contributed to theory through his introduction of the concept of 'responsive evaluation'. Here, he questioned the dominance of evaluation based upon behaviourism, as then found predominantly in the United States influenced by Tyler, and espoused an approach which was more concerned with the preceding context and the process of the evaluation rather than the preordained objectives. Hamilton, Jenkins et al (1977) provide an editorial comment on extracts from some of Stake's early papers which summarises this style of evaluation:

....in considering the goals of a programme Stake does not confine his attention to those pre-specified before its implementation. Neither does he accept any stated goals as the only legitimate basis on which to evaluate....Responsive

evaluation is 'responsive' to the questions of non-specialist audiences. It is consequently democratic, avoiding jargon and having a preference for 'natural' communication. It is focused on activities rather than intentions, and offers interpretations and descriptions. It is issue-centred, seeing issues as a way in to the understanding of complex phenomena.

(p.144-145)

During the same era that Stake was producing his series of papers a conference was held at Churchill College Cambridge in 1972 to examine alternative modes of evaluation. The seminal paper, and term, which emerged was Parlett and Hamilton's 'Evaluation as Illumination', documented in Hamilton, Jenkins, King et al (1977), Simons (1980), Reason and Rowan (1985), Simons (1987) and Norris (1990), among others. Norris recounts the considerable speed with which the paper was disseminated and acknowledges its influence on thinking about traditional approaches to evaluation of educational innovations. To quote from the original paper,

Illuminative evaluation thus concentrates on the information-gathering rather than the decision-making component of evaluation. The task is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex reality (or realities) surrounding the programme: in short to 'illuminate'. In his report, therefore, the evaluator aims to sharpen discussion, disentangle complexities, isolate the significant from the trivial and to raise the level of sophistication of debate.

(p.15 Parlett and Hamilton 1972)

To summarise, it is possible to see that new ways of approaching evaluation have developed to some extent in response to the limitations of traditional models. Norris (op cit) summarises the emergence of a growing number of evaluation theorists with alternative approaches as naturalistic. Although he is doubtful as to whether this represents a paradigm shift, as naturalistic inquiry was not new, (p. 117) it could be said that responsive, illuminative and democratic (MacDonald and Walker 1976) evaluation would more naturally be located within an interpretive or constructivist paradigm, as their evolution to a great extent came about to counteract the problems of a positivist paradigm. This notion of democratic case study is addressed by Walker (1986) and Simons (1987) who see the democratic mode as '*particularly appropriate in case study research, or in evaluation activities using case study techniques*' (Walker in Hammersley, 1986, p.194). This 'democratic' concept formed part of MacDonald and Walker's (op cit) framework of evaluation, including 'bureaucratic', where the evaluator is beholden to (mainly) government or the controllers of educational policy, and 'autocratic', where the evaluator acts in an advisory capacity, her research base being

the academic research community. On the other hand, 'democratic evaluation' is 'an information service to the community about the characteristics of an educational programme' (MacDonald 1974 pp 11-12). The democratic evaluator tries to represent a range of interests and does not allow any sponsorship to influence her report.

Furthermore,

His main activity is the collection of definitions of, and reactions to, the programme. He offers confidentiality to informants and gives them control over the use of the information they provide....The criterion of success is the wide range of audiences served.

(MacDonald in Walker 1986 p193)

Norris (1990) expresses the same views as Walker (op cit) and Simons (op cit) that democratic evaluation is closely linked with case study, in that exposure to a wide audience and espousal of a family of qualitative research methods such as participant observation and interviewing lead to a similarity in approach. It could also be said that both forms of research emerge from the constructivist paradigm examined in the previous section, and would demand the same entry requirements into the research. In methodology literature examined since the beginning of my research (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995, Cohen and Manion 1990, Burgess 1993) it appears that case study as '*a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus on enquiry around an instance*' (Simons 1980) is commonly used as a means of evaluation, and the terms are even used interchangeably at times.

I will now leave the term evaluation and look more specifically at the concept of case study. From the overview of the development of educational evaluation given in the previous paragraphs it is possible to see how case study has emerged as a useful methodological approach. Although case study is not, as Simons (op cit) reminds us, the name for a methodological package there are certain underlying criteria which define this approach to research which I will now discuss.

The research methodology literature provides extensive discussion on the nature of case study and the advantages and disadvantages therein. Hitchcock and Hughes (1989 and 1995) present a set of characteristics likely to be found in case study research:

- concern with the rich and vivid description of events within the case
- a chronological narrative of events within the case
- an internal debate between the description of events and analysis of events

- a focus upon particular individual actors or groups of actors and their perceptions
- a focus upon particular events within the case
- a way of presenting the case which is able to capture the richness of the situation

(adapted from Hitchcock and Hughes 1995 p. 317)

The characteristics of concentration upon a particular incident, or the in-depth study of a single event or series of linked cases over a set period of time, whereby the researcher presents the 'story' or account of events and behaviour from which themes, issues or theories emerge are echoed in Simons (1980, 1987), Hammersley (1986, 1993), Cohen and Manion (1989), Norris (1990), to name only a few commentators on this type of methodology.

In order to explore some of these characteristics of case study in more detail I will link them with the characteristics of my own methodology, thereby clarifying my approach to the research.

Case study as a bounded system

Defining the boundaries of a case study is presented as potentially problematic (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989) in that a clearly identifiable focus is essential to carry out this kind of research with rigour and efficiency, as well as to produce an account which will be acceptable to the intended audience.

Cases will have temporal boundaries, which in my research are clearly identifiable. The two studies of changing support services, represented by the partnerships between classroom teachers and support teachers, began with a change of role on the part of the latter from a prespecified date. The final boundary in the first case was also clearly identifiable as the project came to an end with the dispersal of the support teachers in the summer term of the year. The end of the second case study was decided before the research began, in that one school year seemed to be an appropriate length of time to establish the nature of the partnerships and expediently fitted in with my own working schedule.

Geographical boundaries were only relevant in this case as a function of the choice of sets of support teachers. In the first case study, the support teachers were located within one school; in the second case study decisions were made to focus on the schools

where the support teachers spent the longest amount of time, thereby creating a locational boundary. In the second case also the setting within the local education authority was relevant as the change in role of support teachers had been instigated by a Senior Inspector within that authority.

The characteristics of the role or function of the 'key players' is relevant here in establishing the definition of the case. In both case studies the research centred on support teachers whose particular brief was to work with classroom teachers to effect change in provision for children with special educational needs. In both cases, also, the support teachers had a wider brief of general curriculum development and pedagogical change. These roles provided a clear boundary for case identification.

Case study as a single instance

There are many variations to be found within the methodology literature on the same phrase used to define case study such as '*an examination of an instance in action,*' (Walker 1986 in Hammersley) and '*an instance drawn from a class,*' (Simons 1980). This particularity of case study is probably the most important characteristic but also perhaps the most problematic in terms of evoking criticism of the methodology. I will deal with some of the main criticisms and explain how my own research acknowledged these. First of all, however, it is important to recognise that having chosen to work within a constructivist paradigm, as outlined in the previous part of this chapter, I do not feel that it is appropriate to censure the methodology adopted from a positivist stance. Nevertheless, it is important to ensure that notice has been taken of problems associated with case study research.

The issue of validity is regarded as important for any kind of research. Within the traditional or positivist paradigm this issue has been defined by considering whether a measure '*measures what it purports to measure*' (Reason 1981) and is predicated on a search for 'truths' within the research data. Within a constructivist paradigm, using a case study methodology, we must acknowledge that validity is not about defining the absolute reality of a situation but about recognising that reality is '*holistic, multi-dimensional and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed and measured*' (Merriam 1988 in Hitchcock and Hughes 1995). In a similar way, reliability, which traditionally describes the replicability of

research, requires a more complex definition when applied to case study which is, by definition, a singular event.

Conventionally, these issues are addressed within non-positivist research by a variety of strategies. Researchers can ensure that triangulation is adopted, not only towards data collection, but towards data organisation and data analysis. In the case of my research, data was collected at different periods of time, from several locations and about different persons and partnerships. Different methods were used, for example, semi-structured and structured interviews, participant and non-participant observation, more details of which will be covered in the following sections of this chapter.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) tend to dismiss the notions of validity and reliability as non-applicable within a constructivist paradigm, they develop the concept of credibility as being more useful. This would include *prolonged engagement*, or a substantial involvement at the location of the data collection; *persistent observation*, in order to ensure the researcher can identify the relevant issues within the situation and add depth; *peer debriefing*, whereby a disinterested person can offer feedback and ask appropriate questions. The nature of the design of this research included the first two factors, and peer debriefing can be said to apply to the supervision process built into the development of the thesis.

Another issue which is frequently used as means of criticising case study research is that of generalisability. Ensuring generalisability from a sample to a larger population is not really possible for case study researchers whose work is essentially of an intense nature in few locations. Reaction to this issue is varied within the research methodology literature, from the idea that a 'rich' and 'thick' account (Simons 1980, Hamilton 1980) will stand for itself in the eyes of the reader, from Stake's (1980) concept of '*naturalistic generalisation, arrived at by recognizing the similarities of objects and issues...sensing the natural covariations of happenings,*' to Schofield's (in Hammersley, 1993) account of how qualitative researchers have concentrated on redefining the concept in a more useful way. This redefinition includes the '*fit between the situation studied and others to which one might be interested in applying the concepts and conclusions of that study*' (p.109), a concept which makes the earlier stipulations of a 'rich, thick' account essential in order to supply sufficient information

to make such a judgement. It may be more appropriate to discuss the nature of this 'fit' in the final chapter of this thesis when the application of the 'concepts and conclusions' of the study will be open for examination.

Within case study it is possible to use a range of research methods, although, in general, those of a qualitative nature are to be found predominantly. In the next sections I will discuss interviewing, participant and non-participant observation, and documentary analysis as the techniques which I employed. Within these sections I will also take account of ethical considerations such as confidentiality and access.

3.4 The research methods: interviewing

Humans collect information best, and most easily, through the direct employment of their senses: talking to people, observing their activities, reading their documents, assessing the unobtrusive signs they leave behind, responding to their non-verbal cues and the like.

(Guba and Lincoln 1989 p. 176)

This quotation forms part of a general exposition by Guba and Lincoln as to the predominant use of qualitative methods within research which falls within the constructivist paradigm. Interviewing is one of the most important of these methods as a means of eliciting the perspectives of the research participants. My own research made extensive use of interviewing as a means of contributing the views of these participants towards the eventual case study account.

Powney and Watts (1987) trace interviewing as a methodological tool back to the mass social surveys carried out at the end of the last century. Survey research, particularly in the United States of America, developed the use of interviews as did the clinical research of such luminaries as Piaget, who maintained that allowing the other person to influence the content and direction of the interview enabled real understanding to be reached. As qualitative research methods have developed over the last twenty years or so this search for understanding, and the attempt to see the situation through the interviewee's eyes has led to a development of more complex typologies of interviewing styles. The research methodology literature (for example, Powney and Watts op cit, Hitchcock and Hughes 1989, Burgess 1984, Cohen and Manion 1989) tends to agree that interviews can be categorised as structured, where the interviewer does not digress from a set list of questions, almost like a written questionnaire; semi-structured, where the interviewer has a list of topics or themes to be explored, but may follow leads given by the interviewee if they appear worthwhile, or may ask additional questions to explore an issue further; unstructured or open interviews where the interviewee is encouraged to talk at length about a given subject. The interviews which produced data for this research were semi-structured on the whole, although occasionally structured interviews were used when respondents requested sight of questions before agreeing to the interview.

It does sometimes appear possible to be overly concerned as researchers as to where our style of interviewing fits into such categories, whereas a more relevant discussion might be centred on the factors which affect the quality of the interview. Ribbens (1989) felt that it was important to,

explore further some of these concerns about the nature of the relationships we develop within research interviews.

(p. 580)

In my own research the nature of my relationships to the research participants was considered very carefully both with regard to access in setting up interviews, in composing the issues to be discussed in the interview, and in the assurance of confidentiality afterwards. In the first case study, my role as Acting Head of the Learning Support Service associated me with the borough management who appeared to be imposing a team of teachers on the school in order to bring about change. Interviews with the support teachers, with all of whom I had a strong collegial relationship, and interviews with the classroom teachers, none of whom had I known before the beginning of the project, required different approaches. Oakley (1981) says,

Interviewees are people with considerable potential for sabotaging the attempt to research them.

(p. 56)

Awareness of the 'sabotaging' potential of some teachers within the school was well developed on my part before beginning the interviews through discussion with previous support teachers and with a trusted member of staff who had been seconded to that school during the previous year as acting deputy head. It was important, however, to be open and receptive to the views of the classroom teachers. It was also important to realise that resistance to frankness during an interview situation was an interesting piece of data in itself when examining openness to change and development, or when considering the anxieties and worries of these classroom teachers.

In the second case study there were other kinds of factors which influenced my approach to interviews. The support teachers had been forced to change their role by the local education authority and appeared somewhat anxious about the new style of working. The desire for reciprocity, in terms of reassurance and information, had to be considered during the conduct of the interviews. Both Oakley (op cit) and Measor (1985) advocate reciprocity within the interview situation in terms of personal involvement and

developing friendships, thus ensuring more depth. One could interpret this as a possible means of exploiting the interviewees: even from a more charitable stance the amount of information that the interviewer volunteers can be seen as a '*nuisance...After all, is not part of the research exchange that I have expressed an interest in hearing about the interviewee's life?*' (Ribbens op cit p. 584). In my own case, the main piece of information which the support teachers and the classroom teachers knew was that I had been a support teacher for several years. Listening to interviews it is possible to identify moments when the support teachers asked for affirmation from me regarding problems and issues in their new roles. Awareness of the nature of the researcher-respondent relationship, and the fact that '*the researcher, like her subjects, has an identity, a past, a history, a certain reputation*' (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989 p.167) is important when evaluating research methods and more will be written about this in the final part of the thesis.

In the final part of this section I present some practical details of the interviews carried out. In the first case study, School C in the London Borough of A, I began with the intention of interviewing not only the main participants in the research, namely the support teachers and the classroom teachers, but also a wide variety of people connected with the school past and present. These included past support teachers, educational psychologists, governors and temporary teachers. As my focus on the partnerships between support teachers and classroom teachers tightened it became clear that while useful in providing an initial context, these wider interviews could perhaps have made the research too diffuse. During the first three weeks of the school year, therefore, I narrowed my interviews down to the support teachers, the classroom teachers and the headteacher. As I was then spending two days a week in the school, and still working nearby, there was no difficulty in finding the time at the interviewee's convenience. A list of questions which formed the structure of the interview is provided in Appendix 1. An explanation of 'interviewing' at the end of the project is given in section 3.7.

For the second case study, in the County of J, appointments for interviews had to be much more carefully scheduled as I was travelling up to sixty miles to the research location. An immediate decision was made to interview the support teachers and the newly appointed divisional heads of the integrated support service, the classroom teachers with whom the support teachers worked directly, and the headteachers.

Although permission for the interviews was freely given and two headteachers agreed to stand in for their teachers to accommodate my requests, there appeared to be more constraint on time as this was not open ended, as it mostly was in the first case study. This probably, however, led to greater clarity, my own skills at managing diversions having developed. A transcript of an interview from the second case study is given in Appendix 2 as an illustration for section 3.8 on the analysis of data.

3.5 The research methods: observation

As a method of contributing data to the case studies, within a constructivist paradigm, observation of support teacher and classroom teacher partnerships has played a large part in my research. This section will consider some of the differing terminology used within the research methods literature, will examine the appropriateness and explain the practical application for this research.

‘Observation’ is one of many terms used in accounts of collecting field notes within a natural research setting. It sometimes appears to be used interchangeably with the term ‘ethnography’; for my own clarification Hammersley’s (1985) discussion on the term ‘ethnography’ was helpful. He explains that sometimes this term describes a research paradigm which is epistemologically different from positivism, but to him,

... ethnography is a method of data collection in social research... Its central feature is participant observation: the gaining of first-hand knowledge of events in a social setting through participation and observation, through informal talk with other participants, and through the collection of relevant documents.

(p. 153)

He goes on to say that although ethnography is a research technique rather than a paradigm, to him it is much wider than conventional ‘systematic observation’ in that classroom observation data is supplemented by data collected in other settings such as staffrooms and corridors, and by notes on informal conversations. He adds that documents such as school reports are another source of data.

For the purposes of this section on methodology, whilst agreeing that ethnography is a useful term to explain the approach to my observations in that they had wider locations than the classroom, it is helpful to separate observations of support teacher and classroom interactions from examination of documents. The latter is addressed in the next section. I will, therefore, use the term ‘observation’ with the understanding that this covered planned classroom observations plus other planned meetings between the support teachers and classroom teachers, as well as unplanned events, mainly in staffrooms but also in corridors, car parks, support service centres and support teachers’ homes.

In the research literature, observation is generally divided into a participant or non-participant activity, as indicated in the above quotation from Hammersley. Traditionally non-participant observation has been the tool of researchers working within a positivist paradigm, taking a quantitative stance to data collection (Burgess 1984, Hegarty and Evans 1985, Wragg 1994, Hitchcock and Hughes 1995). On the other hand, participant observation has been the tool of qualitative researchers, working in an interpretive or constructivist paradigm, often in the field of anthropology or ethnographic research, trying to develop explanations and interpretations from events. If participant and non-participant observation are regarded as a continuum (Patton 1980 in Erlandson et al 1993) most qualitative researchers tend to adopt a role somewhere in the middle.

In my own case, it is possible to identify where my role moved between observer-participant and participant-observer. For example, in the first case study, where I was one of the main initiators of the project and the manager of the support teachers, my role was closer to that of participant-observer, although at every stage it was made clear to all the teachers that I was carrying out an evaluation rather than managing the project. After the first term of the project, when I had left the authority and taken up a completely different job, the observer-participant role dominated and I felt more like an outsider. There are, of course, advantages and disadvantages to both these roles, most of which have been well documented in the literature already referred to above. As an insider, or participant, it is possible to collect more data, to gain access to more informal conversations, to be aware of the wider context of the research location from first hand knowledge and to have shared some of the difficulties and frustrations caused by the particular work situation, thereby enhancing the level of understanding on the part of the researcher. It is also necessary to resist being drawn into a level of understanding which might distort data collection and analysis. In this case, for instance, I tried to remain vigilant about the possibility of my own previous role as a support teacher creating any bias in the collection of field notes, as well as the possibility of being used as an extra support teacher within the classroom.

In the second case study, where the time spent with each support teacher was more limited, it was possible to maintain an emphasis on the 'observer' aspect of the observer-participant role. Although I did not copy the example of King (1984) in standing up and avoiding eye contact, thereby being ignored by the children within the classroom, I

was a relative stranger to these classroom teachers and therefore some distance was maintained during observations. I was seldom addressed directly by the classroom teachers during their lessons. This move towards the observer-participant end of the continuum meant that whilst data collection was undoubtedly more efficient and focused on the support teacher/classroom teacher partnerships, some of the potential insight to be gained through informal comments, joking asides, self-explanation of classroom teacher actions and the like, may have been lost. Although not addressed by the classroom teachers during observation data collection, the support teachers frequently turned to me to explain their activities and also appeared to seek affirmation for their work. (My previous consultancy role at the centre of two of the support teachers led me to expect something of this nature and overall, this contributed towards my thinking about the need to 'support the supporters' in the final conclusions.)

To finish this section, I will give outline details of how I collected my fieldnotes, with an example of my original notes in Appendix 3. More details of timings and frequency will be given in the accounts of both case studies in Chapters 4 and 5. Ball (1993) differentiates between 'entry' and 'access' saying that entry granted through formal permission does not necessarily guarantee the co-operation of the participants in the research. He goes on to say that *'The researcher actually may be 'tainted' by the entry process and become identified with the formal authorities in the system'* (p.34). In the first case study there may well have been an element of this 'tainting' as my initial involvement in the research process was closely connected with a change project about which the school teachers were given no choice, an aspect which will feature in the research account. In no way, however, was any hostility or barrier presented to me and it was possible to go into classrooms, staff meetings and informal staff gatherings at will.

In C School, London Borough of A, I observed the interactions between the support teachers and the classroom teachers, mainly in the classrooms but also in the staffroom and the library. I also observed meetings between the support teachers, plus meetings between them and the new Head of the Learning Support Service, and occasionally, some of the borough management team. In the classroom I made notes on A4 paper, moving round the room when necessary to see what was going on in detail. In staff meetings and in-service sessions I made notes as an observer, sometimes recording meetings as well. As the school was directly beneath the flightpath to a major airport the recording

of larger meetings proved problematic and was abandoned by the middle of the first term. Cassette recording of smaller meetings was continued wherever possible to provide data triangulation. Jottings were also made after informal conversations during break and before school. An example of notes taken in the classroom is provided in Appendix 3 (see section 3.8 for an explanation of the initial analysis on these notes).

In the second case study of the partnerships between support teachers and classroom teachers in the County of J, although entry and access were granted freely, unfamiliarity with the schools and staff led me to make fieldnotes with a constrained focus on the support teacher, acting more in a 'shadowing' capacity. In the classroom I mostly positioned myself near to the support teacher, although this varied according to the level of formality of teaching style. All four of these support teachers used break and some lunch times to carry out some of their 'consultancy' work and notes were made accordingly. Using a half page in a notebook enabled me to keep track of my notes more easily and to write initial analytical comments (see section 3.8). An example of these notes is given in Appendix 4 .

3.6 The research methods: documentary analysis

Although this method of research did not make a large contribution to my data collection, it is helpful to acknowledge some of the features of documentary analysis in order to consider the provenance of documents used, both in terms of providing a context to some of the research issues, and as a data triangulation process. Within the educational research methodology literature, although there is considerably less written about documentary analysis than most other methods, there does appear to be agreement on such factors as:

- the overwhelming amount of documentation available within the educational world from official reports to ephemeral teacher notes (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995)
- the need to approach documents in '*an engaged manner*' (May 1993 p.138), the interest in hermeneutics leading to an interrogation of the text
- that the data obtained from documents may be used in the same way as that obtained from interviews and observations (Erlandson et al op cit).

In considering documents helpful in contributing towards the data from which I deepened my understanding of the issues emerging from these case studies it was, indeed, important to resist the overwhelming nature of this documentation. A pre-selection process took place, therefore, whereby documents such as the support teachers' own evaluations and newsletters which shed light on their perceptions of the partnerships were retained and analysed as evidence, while the Schools' Librarian's (in the first case study) paper on developing C School's library was not seen as useful in contributing towards an understanding of the support teacher/classroom teacher partnership, even though it contributed towards change within the school. Another kind of selection process was also essential in terms of deciding which documents might usefully be part of the Literature Chapter, such as the local authority policies on special educational needs, and which might be useful as evidence. Cohen and Manion (1989) refer to this as a common problem in writing up research.

The need to approach documents '*in an engaged manner*' covers issues such as authenticity, credibility and interpretation and meaning. All of the documents used as data were collected from the primary source so their authenticity was not really an issue, except for a need to be aware of the different interpretations that each support teacher (in the first case study) gave when writing up meetings and reviews of time spent in school. This in itself was an interesting facet of the data rather than a problem of authenticity. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) say that credibility '*in a document refers to whether it is free from errors or distortions and to the questions of sincerity and authorship*' (p.224). In this case I would suggest that although the documents were written sincerely and authorship was verified, this did not necessarily prevent errors or distortions on the part of the authors. As with authenticity, rather than being a problem this was an interesting aspect of how the support teachers saw their own roles. The interpretation and meaning of the documents used will be covered under the section on analysis of data (3.8).

3.7 The research methods: questionnaires

Questionnaires tend to be used more within a quantitative style of research, or within large scale surveys with the intention of generalising from the sample. As already discussed in previous sections my research lies within a different paradigm and seeks to

elicit understandings and explanations from the participants. This section on questionnaires, therefore, is not intended to cover characteristics such as question construction and statistical analysis of responses but to explain why it was necessary to use a written form of questioning and some of the issues surrounding this process.

In the first case study, School C in the London Borough of A, all the classroom teachers and the support teachers involved were interviewed at the beginning of the project. I intended to interview the same people at the end of the school year but it became increasingly apparent that the support teachers would not be available at a convenient time and that the classroom teachers expressed some reluctance to be interviewed, especially as the main time I could offer was during their own time, before school, during lunch or after school. By June of the summer term the support teachers were becoming increasingly occupied by finishing other activities, for example, a higher degree and being in the final stages of pregnancy, taking over the reins of a forthcoming acting headship, actively seeking jobs away from London, and writing and publishing general papers for the Support Service. They did promise to fill in a series of written, open questions which sought to gain their per-spectives on the work they had done in C School during that year. Three of them did so and returned them quickly, one only responding minimally. The classroom teachers agreed to respond to a set of written questions while I taught their classes. Apart from two teachers who said they wanted to spend more time on their responses, and then did not return them, this worked out well. (These two were teachers with whom the support teachers worked only in a peripheral way.)

I would, perhaps, compare these questionnaires to structured interviews rather than the more conventional questionnaire. They did, however, throw up similar issues such as response rates, and illustrated the limitations of questionnaires as a way of eliciting the real opinions of respondents rather than a reiteration of the questionnaire setter's views. For me they were a functional substitute for a semi-structured interview.

3.8 Analysis

This section of the chapter considers some of the issues surrounding analysis of qualitative data and presents a brief overview of my own practice in this research. I am considering the analysis of interviews, observations, documents and questionnaire responses together, as the same system was applied to them all.

There is frequent acknowledgement in the research methodology literature of the paucity of writing about data analysis (Morse 1994) and the difficulties which can occur within the qualitative process (Hitchcock and Hughes op cit). Bryman and Burgess (1994) in their editorial review of a wide selection of accounts of analysis, feel that their contributors view qualitative data as '*voluminous, unstructured and unwieldy*' (p.216). They go on to give a useful summary of types of analytical approaches: coding, a key process in the organisation of notes, transcripts and documents, but a term which is used both for cutting and pasting of notes as well as theory generation; conceptualisation, which is based on grounded theory as posited in the seminal work by Glaser and Strauss (1967), and which can go on during, as well as after, fieldwork; and grounded theory itself, bearing in mind that '*quite rarely do we find evidence in the contribution of the iterative interplay of data collection and analysis that lies at the heart of grounded theory and...rarely do we find clear indications that theory is being developed*' (Bryman and Burgess op cit p.221).

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) provide a distinction between analysing data in the field and after data collection. Bryman and Burgess (op cit) provide a useful summary of suggestions here:

the authors suggest that the researcher needs to be constantly engaging in preliminary analytic strategies during data collection. Such strategies include: forcing oneself to narrow down the focus of the study; continually reviewing field notes in order to determine whether new questions could fruitfully be asked; writing memos about what you have found out in relation to various issues (this is a grounded theory tactic); and trying out emergent ideas. Analysis after the field is essentially concerned with the development of a coding system. They present 'families of codes' which are fairly generic and can apply to a variety of different contexts. These include: setting/context codes; informants' perspectives; how informants think about people and objects; process codes; activity codes; strategy codes; and personal relationship codes.

(p.7)

An informative, practical example of data analysis is given by Ball (1991) where he discusses his own methods of 'primitive' initial coding, refinement of categories, and the process whereby these begin to yield '*conceptually dense theory*' (p.185). He also makes clear the importance of reference to the literature in the process of analysis, maintaining that '*there is always a huge resource of concepts 'out there' to be plundered*' (p.185). Another practical example, provided by Cooper and MacIntyre (1996), gives insight into constant comparative analysis, a process '*by which the unfolding descriptive theories that emerge from the data are constantly tested and refined to take account of all relevant data*' (p.93).

Below is a brief outline of my own system of analysis. This will be referred to again in Chapter 7. First of all, I will make some general comments. Referring to the lengthy direct quotation above, from Bryman and Burgess, I found that narrowing down the focus of the study was reinforced by emerging coding categories in the first case study. These ranged from evidence for resource based learning to autonomous learning and special educational needs: although interesting, they did not relate to the research questions focused on the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers. The development of technology has been helpful in that quick, flexible photocopying and an increasingly large range of colours for highlighter pens and 'post-it' notes have facilitated a much speedier handling of data.

My own system of analysis has been:

1. Reading field notes: transcribing and part-transcribing interviews; reading documents to be used as data; reading questionnaire responses.
2. Numbering pages for reference.
3. Preliminary coding using highlighter pens and initials, evidence to support:
 - pink - nature of the relationship between the two teachers
 - green - planning and preparation PP; time spent together TT; proportion contributed by each teacher PC; initiation of ideas I; content/pedagogy C/P;
 - orange - division of tasks in classroom; responsibility for lesson starts/changes/finishes RL; interaction with children (SEN and whole class) IWC; interaction between teachers in classroom IT; interaction between teachers outside classroom IO; responsibility for monitoring SEN/whole class RMS/

WC: withdrawing children W:

blue - nature of any change in curriculum leading to enhanced access for SEN

4. Memo writing on the data -questions, notes, reminders, reference to literature
5. Using plain A3 paper, for each partnership or team within each case study, group issues together with page number of evidence
6. Concept mapping for emerging themes
7. Refer to concepts within literature
8. Refine into the account of the two case studies, integrating initial analysis with chronological narrative.

The product of this analysis is, of course, the focus of the last two chapters of the thesis. Here, I give as an example my treatment of fieldnotes (Case study 1 - Appendix 3 Case study 2 - Appendix 4).

3.9 Summary

This chapter has provided a theoretical justification and a practical explanation of the means by which I conducted my research. Working within a constructivist paradigm I chose qualitative methods to produce two case studies, focused on support teachers working with classroom teachers in primary education. So far in this chapter I have not referred specifically to the question of ethics, although connected issues such as access have been mentioned. It seems appropriate to consider ethics in this final section.

Being trustworthy as a qualitative researcher means at the least that the processes of the research are carried out fairly, that the products represent as closely as possible the experiences of the people who are studied. The entire endeavor must be grounded on ethical principles about how data are collected and analyzed, how one's own assumptions and conclusions are checked, how participants are involved, and how results are communicated. Trustworthiness is, thus, more than a set of procedures. To my mind, it is a personal belief system that shapes the procedures in process.

(Ely 1991 p.93)

This quotation sums up the general nature of ethical awareness which should be maintained by researchers. In the case of research located within a constructivist paradigm, the beliefs of the researcher should go a long way towards ensuring that these 'responsibilities' are carried out. Referring back to section 2.3 above, Guba and Lincoln set out the 'entry conditions' for fourth generation evaluation, including:

...a consideration of ethical issues should, as well as the conventional aspects

such as fully informed consent, privacy/confidentiality and the like, welcome the participants as equal partners in every aspect of design, implementation, interpretation, and resulting action...ensuring that these participants are treated as human beings and not the subject of scientific experiment.

(Guba and Lincoln op cit p.11)

In my own case, every effort was made to gain and earn the trust of participants and respect confidentiality by the alteration of names and omission of place names. I also feel that because of my previous involvement in the focus of the research, and my own continued professional interest in the subject, my responsibilities to colleagues and the teaching profession, as mentioned above have been fulfilled.

I would like to end this chapter with a reiteration of the research questions which form the basis of the case studies presented in Chapters 4 and 5:

1. How is the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers perceived?
2. To what extent does change in the curriculum and in provision for children with special educational needs emerge from teachers working in this model?
3. What elements of the relationship need to be developed to ensure a sound foundation for effective practice?

The next two chapters give the accounts of the two case studies and the final chapter will provide a further evaluation of some aspects of the research approach and methods.

Chapter 4

The London Borough of A

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is an account of the work of four members of the Learning Support Service in a junior school in the London Borough of A, over one academic year. The account focuses on the partnerships between the support teachers and the classroom teachers and attempts to address the following research questions:

- (i) How is the relationship perceived by the support teachers and by the classroom teachers?
- (ii) To what extent does any change in the curriculum and in provision for children with special educational needs emerge from the work of the partnership?
- (iii) What elements of this relationship need to be developed to ensure a sound foundation for effective practice?

The first section of this chapter gives information on the background to the Learning Support Service which is relevant to an understanding of the work of the support teachers. There is also brief information about the local education authority in which the research took place, and some background to the school concerned. The next section examines the original expectations of the participants in this case study, and is followed by an account of the work of the support teachers in C School, focusing mainly on the partnerships with classroom teachers. The final section summarises some of the reflections on the work of the learning support teachers throughout the year.

4.1 Background information and the beginning of the project

The Local Education Authority

This Borough was one of the largest in London, having 73 primary schools. It had been created fifteen years previously through the amalgamation of a fairly prosperous borough in the north and a borough to the south beset with housing and social problems. The political tensions created by this amalgamation had never been resolved and during the two years before this research project began, the local, London-wide, and national press had paid increasing attention to the happenings in the Borough of A, with a particular focus on education. Key personnel, such as the Director of Education, who endorsed the initiation

of this work, and the Chief Inspector, who offered helpful insights at the beginning, left the Borough during the year of its implementation. The Inspector for Primary Education, who first suggested the increased degree of involvement by the Support Service in this particular school, retired early.

The Learning Support Service

The Learning Support Service had evolved from a Remedial Reading Service previously connected to the Schools' Psychological Service. At this time there were six Learning Support Centres which contained a wide range of resources for use in centres and schools, and for loan to schools. There were 18 full time support teachers with Burnham Scale 3 posts, and 6 Scale 2 support teachers. The separation from the Schools' Psychological Service had happened three years before, the Service then becoming accountable to the Inspector for Special Educational Needs.

The change in name from Remedial Reading Service to Learning Support Service was not merely semantic. It followed extensive debate within the Service and between the Service and the Chief Educational Psychologist. It also represented changes occurring within the provision of special educational needs on a nation-wide basis, as discussed in Chapter 2 above. The evolution of this Remedial Reading Service from individualised to whole class support was not only influenced by high demand identified in the south of the borough, but also by other factors including courses which support teachers had attended, the retirement of a group of long-standing support teachers who had been strong advocates of centre-based, out-of-school teaching, and subsequent recruitment of younger classroom teachers, those with wider experience such as media resource officers, and those who saw such work as useful additional experience towards promotion.

The appointment of a new Head of Service three years previously had expedited change and expansion over the following years. The new Head strongly believed that provision for children with special educational needs should occur within their own classrooms and that the Service should move towards consultation and teacher advice and away from individualised teaching. This contention was partly the result of expediency, as very large demands were being made on the Service, but was also based on research and study in the area of special needs. Through her strong personal influence, through extensive in-service work for the Service, the nature of the work, as well as the name of the Service and the teachers was changed over this time.

The Head of Service left in 1986 and I was appointed as acting Head. The philosophy of the Service continued its metamorphosis and several newly appointed support teachers were keen to work in a more concentrated way with one or two schools.

C Junior School

C Junior School, in which the research took place, was built in 1915 with a traditional layout of classrooms opening off a corridor. Although the bottom floor was shared with a separate infant school accommodation was spacious, with many spare rooms and cupboards. There were about 190 children in eight classes, with ten teachers plus the Head. Class sizes ranged from 26 in Year 3 to 19 in Year 6. [The research took place before the terminology of Year 1....11 was established. To avoid confusion I have used the more recent means of describing classes in their year groups.] After a period of very rapid staff turnover, the school had had a fairly stable staff for five years. Over the two years before this research began, the school roll had fallen by about 50 children.

During these two years the school had been appraised by the Borough Inspectors and had undergone a short HMI inspection. The local inspection report focused on the under-achievement of pupils:

Many of the discipline problems in the school may be overcome when the school pays serious attention to the underachievement of many of its pupils. The lack of planning and curriculum management has led to over abundance of unstimulating and mechanical work, which does not really allow many of the children to express their true selves.

(p.11 1986)

Possibly the most insightful comment regarding the school as a whole was:

The more energy that the teachers expend on control, the less they will have for actual education - yet it is the education that will help children to develop self-control. At the time of the appraisal, it seemed that, in the absence of other professional criteria, some teachers were judging each other on their ability to impose control. The process of changing from an imposed or teacher-centred control to pupil-centred learning will be a difficult one, but is a crucial one if standards are to be improved.

(p.12 1986)

This document summarised incisively the ethos of the school and influenced the initial planning of the learning support teachers. There was tension between the Head and his staff, and between members of the staff, which played some part in the perception of the role of the incoming support team. The HMI report, although couched in blander terms, also levelled criticism at the school, particularly at two individual teachers who were

regarded as unsuitable for taking whole classes. Neither of these teachers responded to suggestion of early retirement as they were both on protected Scale 3 salaries. After the appraisal and inspection the morale of the staff was low.

Summary

The combination of factors at LEA, Service and school levels outlined above led to an eagerness for change. As acting Head of the Support Service, when I was approached by the Inspector for Primary Education and asked whether we would consider giving a considerable amount of input into C School during the following year, it seemed an appropriate time to synthesise the discussions and ideas generated by many of the support teachers into an action plan for changing our way of working. Equally keen were the Inspectors and the Director of Education, who led a staff meeting introducing the idea of an outside group of teachers working for improvement in the school. The follow up report to the Borough appraisal of the school contained the following:

Discussions are shortly to start with the Learning Resources Service on the possibility of initiating a Curriculum Enhancement Project.

(p.13)

The Headteacher and governors also seized on the possibility of enhanced support as a way of developing the practice of the teachers and thus improving the reputation of the school. The teachers spoke little in meetings but during informal conversations they appeared to view the input of the Learning Support Service as extra teaching for the children who were perceived as the source of the school's difficulties.

At this time, during the latter half of the summer term, it was decided that I would be the evaluator of the project (see previous chapter). At first the proposal was for me to produce a document for the Chief Inspector, and to use the data for my own higher degree purposes. As already mentioned, events in the Borough led to the departure of the Chief Inspector and the Director of Education, and to most of those originally interested in the project, making the production of a formal evaluation report redundant, and leaving me free to concentrate on the higher degree research. The next section gives an account of the starting points of the main participants in the project, and covers the time before the work in school began.

4.2 Early views and original expectations

This section will look at the original expectations of the support teachers and the classroom teachers. It will also include a brief consideration of the perspectives of the Inspectors who influenced the formulation of the project, and of others who influenced the thinking of the support team, such as the Head of the Learning Support Service.

The evidence to support this account is drawn from:

- individual interviews with the four support teachers participating in the research, the class teachers and the headteacher.
- tape recordings of meetings: initial planning and discussion meetings with the whole Learning Support Service; initial planning meetings for the four members of the project team; introductory meetings between the four support teachers and the school staff; discussions between the support teachers, the Primary Inspector and English Inspector; I was present at most of these meetings, made field notes, and otherwise used the minutes made by a member of the project team.
- observations of the school, particularly the two Year 6 classrooms.
- documentary analysis of minutes of support teachers' meetings, their weekly diaries, school's curriculum and policy documents, all made available to me on request.

4.2.1 The Support Service as a whole

When it was first suggested by the Primary Inspector that the Learning Support Service should work with one school in a more concentrated way, '*to demonstrate how the adoption of good primary practice can lead to an improvement in children's self-image, behaviour and educational attainment*' (Discussion paper JH February 1986), reactions of the learning support teachers were mixed. While agreeing to more in-depth involvement in schools it was felt that the proposed model of demonstration teaching was inappropriate and would not bring about long term change. The minutes taken from the first of many Service meeting reflected feelings of doubt and ambivalence. A selection of views expressed follows:

- change is most usefully achieved by people agreeing to the need to change
- they [class teachers] may understandably feel threatened in view of the recent appraisal

- without shared philosophies any possible emulation of good practice would be mere parroting and not brought about through conviction
- if problems arise, this would further compound the views of C School staff that nothing can be done with these children.

Further suggestions were also made that there should be ongoing, whole staff discussion and long term pre-planning should be put in place for any possible future project.

Several meetings followed and by April, the twelve support teachers who were particularly interested in the project had produced a document for presentation to the Director of Education and the Inspectors. The document presented an outline of the project, the formulation of goals and the immediate steps for action. The introductory section began:

The Learning Resources Service, through their involvement in C Junior School, aims to work simultaneously with the individual teachers and the whole school as an organisation in order to effect the necessary changes in response to the children's educational needs. As a Service our focus is usually on children with special educational needs. Enhanced chances of success can be given to these pupils through changes in teacher attitudes, school organisation and curriculum presentation. These changes improve the education of all pupils.

(p.1 A Learning Resources Service 6.5.86)

The introductory section went on to stress the necessity of developing strategies for goal discussion and agreement with the school:

While a Learning Resources Service can identify and discuss 'GOALS' at the general level of good educational practice, we consider it ESSENTIAL that the school in question must be put in a position to begin to formulate its own goals before negotiation about the role of ALRS. Any imposition of 'outside' expertise without the prior discussion of needs by those actually in the situation would be bound to fail. The long term aim of self-sustaining change absolutely requires the confidence and commitment of the school staff. The school staff need to be enabled to arrive at solutions: they are primarily responsible, and that responsibility should not be stolen from them.

(p.1 A Learning Resources Service 6.5.86)

The remainder of the document covered a wide range of issues regarded as essential to bring about school improvement, such as, multicultural education, curriculum awareness, curriculum content, resources, in-service training, assessment and evaluation, parental participation and community involvement. This was, of course, before the instigation of the National Curriculum; local authority policies did not exist and the appraisal report had highlighted the sparseness of the school's documentation.

The Service discovered only informally through discussion that the project would go ahead on the terms stipulated, although no official response was ever given to the submitted document. By the second half of the summer term a core team of four support teachers had been formed, the rest of the Service who were interested acting in a supportive role for this team. At this time the new Head of Service, Sandra, began work. Since her appointment Sandra had been kept informed of the proposed project and was in broad agreement with the aims. She had been working in higher education in Scotland where she had run a full time year-long course for support teachers who had changed role from direct teaching of children with special educational needs to a mainly advisory and consultant role.

4.2.2 Original expectations: the Curriculum Access Pilot Scheme team

Four support teachers were identified as being keen to work in C School over the forthcoming year. Other members of the Service were willing to act in a supportive capacity but not to work in the school. One of the issues that will be examined closely in the account of the project is the views, attitudes and interpersonal skills of these support teachers. It is opportune now, therefore, to give a brief description of each person, which inevitably includes my own evaluation.

Kate was an experienced teacher in primary, secondary and special education, in her mid-thirties. She had been working for the Support Service for two years, having come from leading a remedial secondary department in a neighbouring borough. Her longest stay in any previous job had been two and a half years. She was very interested in computer skills and had started to produce cataloguing systems for the Resource Service centres. She presented as a very confident, jocular person, outspoken but not threatening. She openly discussed her personal financial problems and the fact that she had two travelling sales jobs in the evenings, which had been known to affect her punctuality at work the following day. She was, however, always willing to attend meetings after school closing time, and during official vacation time.

Maria, in her late thirties, an experienced early years teacher, had trained and worked in Scotland before her previous post as a Scale 2 infants' teacher. Maria had just been promoted from a Scale 2 to a Scale 3 post within the Learning Support Service, one year

after her appointment. This appointment had been one of a group made by the previous Head of Service in a deliberate effort to employ teachers straight from the classroom, regardless of special educational needs training or experience. As Maria was softly spoken and appeared shy it was sometimes easy to overlook her contribution to planning discussions. At the planning stage of the project Maria was in the first year of a part-time M.A. in Language at the West London Institute of Education. The teaching philosophy which underpinned this degree, and with which Maria wholeheartedly concurred, embraced the 'real books' approach to reading, and the developmental writing approach.

Peter, approaching forty, had been working in the Support Service for nine months. His educational experience was broad, covering primary and secondary education, as well as training and working as a media resources officer in the Inner London Education Authority. Peter had moved jobs frequently, his longest post lasting two years. He had no experience of special educational needs teaching apart from the last nine months in the Support Service. During the year before his current appointment he had spent six months in Japan studying one of the martial arts, at which he was an expert and high level coach, and which took up a lot of his time and energy. Peter had completed the taught part of an M.A. in Curriculum Studies at Goldsmith's College and was now considering his dissertation. He was articulate and his side of a conversation was often conducted at a high intellectual level.

Victoria, in her mid-fifties, had considerable experience of all phases of education in Britain, Africa and the far east. She was particularly experienced at working with emotionally and behaviourally disturbed children. Her views had moved away from a strong belief in individualised treatment of children outside the classroom environment: she had worked as a support teacher for six years and was foremost in the move towards a change of role from individual, centre-based teaching to peripatetic, consultative or classroom-based teaching. Victoria appeared to have considerable energy and was a member of many Borough committees or working parties, mainly in the areas of language, reading and equal opportunities. She had developed a wide network upon which she frequently called for resources, visiting speakers or additional advice and support. Victoria was an enthusiastic individual and exhibited strong determination to bring about change.

Taking an overall perspective of this team it is possible to identify some shared views although these do not necessarily apply to all four at the same time. The following is a list of experience and views which are relevant to the way in which the project was carried out (and not all of which appear in the above pen pictures), and the names to whom these apply:

- experience with children who have learning or behavioural difficulties - Kate and Victoria
- experience of resource organisation, computer and media skills - Kate and Peter
- a strong and actively promoted belief that children learn to read through 'real books' and a psycholinguistic approach - Maria and Veronica, and Peter and Kate to a lesser extent
- a strong belief that primary school classrooms should be organised so that children work autonomously in groups, with the teacher as facilitator of learning and provider of resources - Kate, Maria, Peter, Victoria
- a belief that children's special educational needs represent curriculum problems and that changes in the curriculum would address those needs - Kate, Maria, Peter, Victoria

Apart from these shared views, all four support teachers had gained or were currently studying for a higher degree or advanced diploma, and were open in their wish for promotion and more responsibility, although they did not seem to be actively seeking jobs at the beginning of the research.

During the regular meetings which took place during the second half of the summer term, attended at times by the Chief Inspector, the English Inspector, the Head of C School, the Primary Schools' Librarian, the team announced that future intentions should be decided with the school staff, that a *Curriculum Enhancement Project Bulletin* should be produced, and that the name of the project would be changed to *Curriculum Access Pilot Scheme*.

Interviews with the individual members of the team also revealed views on and concerns about the project. After only one visit the support team felt surprised at the positive welcome they received from C School staff, contrary to expectations. In contrast, they found the physical aspects of the school very daunting in terms of poor or little display, deteriorating standard of decoration, and a library and resources room which had become a dumping area for all kinds of old and dirty resources. Looking ahead to their role during the forthcoming year there were some interesting contrasts in views. Kate wanted

to transform the library and resources area and saw herself doing the ‘donkey work’ whereas Peter saw himself as generating ideas and operating on a consultation or counselling model. Maria and Victoria both saw themselves working with the staff to help them formulate their own problems, and solutions.

The main obstacles visualised were the lack of time for real joint preparation; resistance to a support teacher change of role and resistance to change of curriculum and pedagogy within the school; differences in perceptions between the support teachers and the school staff, and possibly differences within the support team itself; the low expectations which the school staff had of the children; and the autocratic nature of primary school leadership with its emphasis on the strength of the Headteacher. Peter also referred extensively to the wider political system, both national and within the borough but acknowledged that this change was outside his power. They all felt that in an ideal situation a support team would have had at least a term for full time, joint planning, instead of two afternoons a week over half a term. In addition, they all felt that ideally they would have been invited in by a school which wished to implement change, rather than be imposed on the school by local authority senior management. All four support teachers expressed the view that they would like to leave the school with *‘something that will carry on’* (Kate). Maria wished to *‘see the school having some sort of support system for itself’*, and Peter wished to see *‘a school that had a sound and ongoing concern for the review of the curriculum’*. Only Kate and Victoria were specific about affecting the way in which the school handled provision for special educational needs.

Summarising the expectations of the four support teachers at this early stage, it would appear that they approached the project as a challenge to be grappled with intellectually, applying their own strengths and interests. They seemed to be aware of potential pitfalls, the possible difficulties of change imposed on an institution and the strong probability of some kind of resistance to change suggestions.

Comment

At this early stage it is possible to see how the philosophy and some of the practical details of the project were shared with a wide variety of people but not with the classroom teachers. The team spent many hours discussing intellectual ideas which could feed into their proposals for the forthcoming year. The support team saw this project as a ‘pilot scheme’ for change towards a new model for the Learning Support Service but the school

staff appeared to be looking for support in their move towards school improvement and particularly with discipline matters. The support team had high expectations regarding resources, particularly time. If they saw this as a pilot scheme, it may have been more realistic to have acknowledged the time constraints placed on such support work, and on the teachers who were meant to adopt ideas and strategies.

4.2.3 Original expectations - the school staff

This section begins with a brief description of the class teachers and the Head. These descriptions are based on my own observations of the teachers during meetings, teaching in class, during informal sessions in the staff room and remarks made by other teachers and the support team. I am aware of possible misjudgments within these accounts but the experiences, backgrounds and personalities of the school staff made a considerable contribution towards the outcome of the project. An account of the school's expectations from the Curriculum Access Pilot Scheme follows. This is based on interviews carried out with the Head and all the teachers during the last week of the summer term before the project began (except for B and J who were interviewed on their return to school, see below), and on the introductory meeting held during the same week which was recorded, and from which minutes were taken by a member of the support team.

Headteacher: A was in his late forties, was born and educated in Trinidad, and was the first black Headteacher to be appointed in the borough. He had worked at C school for two and a half years. There was a considerable amount of friction between A and his staff with open animosity reported to have been shown on both sides.

Deputy Headteacher: B, early forties, had been teaching in this school for eighteen years. He broadcast his Welsh nationality loudly and was usually noisy, jocular and cynical in public. He appeared to be an effective, if traditional, class teacher, popular and respected by the children. He had failed in his application for the C School Headship. The majority of teachers looked to him for leadership and support with discipline. He was to be responsible for the language policy. He knew nothing about the project until the day before the autumn term began as he had been away on secondment for a year, during which time he had been on an Advanced Diploma course.

C Female teacher, late fifties. C had been teaching at the school for twenty four years, the last two taking small groups of children out of the class, usually for science activities, her post of responsibility. C had continual unspecified health problems and was frequently absent.

D Male teacher, early sixties. D had been teaching at the school for twenty two years, the last two as a remedial teacher on the recommendation of HMI and a local inspection. He was about to be placed back in a Year 6 class at the beginning of the project. D was loudly welcoming but questioning in his approach to the support team. His wife was seriously ill and this affected the amount of time he could spend in discussions and meetings after school.

E Male teacher, mid thirties. E had worked in the school for sixteen years and had been responsible for resources. E had moved to live sixty miles away from the school and commuted every day by coach. He was very quiet and frequently slept during lunch time. He had to leave school immediately after the children had gone home in order to catch his return coach.

F Male teacher, early fifties. F had worked in the school for 13 years, from the time he had come as an Asian refugee from Uganda. He had responsibility for art and craft. F was quite open about his other job out of school where he ran his own painting and decorating firm and which prevented him from staying on after the children had left for meetings and discussion. F was very quiet during formal and informal discussions.

G Male teacher, late forties. G was also an Asian refugee from Uganda, thirteen years in the school. He had responsibility for the library. G was quiet but confident and highly respected by staff and children. He appeared to be very committed to his role within the school. He was about to teach a Year 5 class.

H Male teacher, early forties. He had also come from Uganda and had been at the school for thirteen years. He had responsibility for mathematics throughout the school and kept most of the resources in his classroom. He was about to teach a Year 5 class and openly admitted that he would have discipline problems. He was popular with other staff but was regarded as a weak teacher in terms of controlling the children.

J Female teacher, late twenties. J had worked in the school for eight years and was on maternity leave at the beginning of the project, returning half way through the autumn term. She was Welsh which gave her a closeness to the Deputy, next door to whom she had always worked and who appeared to act as a role model in terms of teacher behaviour. She knew nothing about the project until she returned to school after her leave.

K Female teacher, early twenties. K was a probationary teacher who began her job in the autumn term as the project began. She was Afro-Caribbean and very soon after beginning her job made her awareness of racism in the school - both in terms of children and staff - known. She appeared confident and very committed to her job.

Several members of this very experienced and long-serving staff had frequently visited one of the Learning Support Centres which was based in a separate building on the same campus (not the Centre at which the support team was based). This Centre (formerly called the Remedial Reading Centre) had lent resources for use in the classroom with individual children identified as having reading difficulties. In describing how the class teachers had seen the role of the Learning Resources Service in the past most responses included the focus on individual children. The previous support teacher attached to C School, Steven, had worked partly in the classroom and partly on a withdrawal basis, according to his judgement of teacher responsiveness to his approach. This was reflected in the class teachers' perceptions of the support role. The change from withdrawal to in-class support was generally recognised, albeit somewhat cynically or critically. Remarks such as, *'....originally took children out until that became less fashionable...'*, *'...they were mainly helping with children with learning difficulties, either withdrawing or working in class. It wasn't their fault but it was mainly a piecemeal approach,'* indicated some scepticism, although this was countered by approval for the in-class approach from three of the class teachers. Comments on the past role of support teachers focused on help for children; there was only one, minimal reference to help for the classroom teacher.

The view of the role of the members of the forthcoming project centred around provision and organisation of resources within the school and help within the classroom. The library, organisation of book week, and provision of ACER (Afro-Caribbean Centre for Educational Resources) materials were mentioned. The expression of a need for this help varied from one teacher who felt that the support teachers would not be able to add to

what was there but would *'collate what was there and see that it's put in the right places'*, to another teacher who said,

What was I saying when we met the Director after the appraisal is that we need people who have experienced locally, modern teaching methods, who have thought it out, and who know that these are successful... What happened, why don't we get some good teachers, have them in here for a year.... and then you people come along and what you're doing is you're saying we have to find out how we're going to use the service. Well that's great, great, but it isn't answering my problem.

These reflections were echoed by others who commented that the school had had a seemingly endless succession of advisers who brought in maths or science equipment, but that no one had ever come to show them how it worked with these particular children.

It is not easy to summarise coherently the original expectations of the school. The Headteacher appeared to see the project as a way of aiding him to enforce change in the school; there were hints from several teachers that they hoped the project would lead to changes which ought to have been put in place before; several teachers were open in their wish to see good practice in action as they did not really believe it could happen with the sort of children who attended C School; most teachers felt that, as far as they were able to be clear, the project's main focus was the reorganisation of the library and resources. Several teachers felt that the project would be helpful for colleagues although only one person was specifically alluded to. Only two teachers mentioned children with learning difficulties and one of them questioned whether such children got too many of the *'goodies'* and suggested that the project team were going to ensure *'goodies all round'*. This same teacher made a statement which possibly summarises the thinking of all the class teachers:

I think that the whole thing is going to need a lot of talk and yet talk won't do anything. It's the actual carrying out of the thing that will get people doing it properly. I don't know how you're going to manage that.

Considering that the school had fairly recently received two negative reports and was not regarded as a thriving institution, the teachers appeared, perhaps surprisingly, to be cheerful and welcoming to the project team.

Comment

Below are some questions and dilemmas which arise from this section:

- (i) The school staff consisted of individuals with very varied backgrounds and needs, professional and personal. A question would be asked about the extent to which the

support teachers were able to take these backgrounds and needs into account in their planning and work.

(ii) The class teachers themselves appeared keen to see excellent practice shown within their own context, although the Service had instantly rejected the model of support where a sustained example of ideal practice would be demonstrated. This tension did not appear to be addressed during the planning stage.

(iii) More than half of the class teachers expressed reservations about the feasibility of introducing new ideas to some colleagues.

(iv) Several class teachers implied that there had already been too much talk and discussion and that there was a need for immediate action. The support teachers, on the other hand, spent a great deal of time on discussion among themselves, and also felt that there should be several discussion meetings with the class teachers before anything began.

4.2.4 Original expectations - other participants

As well as the support and class teachers on which the research was focused the views of more peripheral participants played some part in influencing the thinking of these parties. The Chief Inspector expressed a strong opinion that all decisions and planning should be shared with the school staff and that terms such as '*Curriculum Access*' (as in the new title of the project) should be fully explained, as this was a '*technical, rich and generative term*', the understanding of which could not be assumed. He also advised that the support team were not management consultants and that the project must draw a line between curriculum and management issues. The newly appointed Head of the Learning Support Service had come from a teacher training institution in Scotland where she had been training support teachers on a one-year full time course. She had very clear, strong views on how support teachers should work on a mainly consultative basis, with some co-operative teaching and direct teaching of children. She felt that from her visits to C School the staff were looking for certainties and that the project team should define itself more clearly. She saw two contending sets of outcomes: the service was looking for a new model and the school was looking for improvement. The new Head felt that the service needed to be more theoretical and needed a clearly defined view to take to the school, so that negotiation could take place between the school's aims and the service's aims. During the first meeting between the school and the project team, when challenged

as to the reasons for changing the name of the project, the Head of the Service made the comment that:

'... we need to narrow down the focus, be more specific, and we have negotiated further. Changing the words from 'enhancement' to 'access' doesn't mean we're going back to only look at four children in your class. The idea is to look at the whole curriculum and work alongside you to make sure that the curriculum is accessible to everyone in that class, including the half a dozen that are a real problem.'

As the acting Head of Service who originally agreed to support teachers working in this intensive way, and then as the evaluator of the project, my own views clearly permeate the writing up of the research. Specifically in terms of expectation before the project began I felt optimistic that the team would have a strong impact on the working of the whole school. It seemed clear to me that the project was being used as a 'stalking horse' in order to improve the whole school through an apparent focus on special needs. At that time this approach seemed acceptable, and indeed, flattering to the Learning Support Service.

4.3 The Project during the Year

This section outlines the support team's plans for the year, gives some reasons for decisions made and provides some comment on the issues arising after the first half term. The following sections relate the account of the work of the project and are accompanied by initial comments on issues arising. The evidence to support these accounts is based on non-participant observation and fieldnotes made in class during the times that support teachers were working with classroom teachers; notes made on informal discussions with classteachers and support teachers before and after sessions; observations of and recorded discussions with children; recorded staff meetings plus notes made during these meetings; recorded in-service sessions. This field research was carried out over one and half days a week in the autumn term, and one day a week in the spring and summer terms.

4.3.1 Beginning the project and outlining the plans for the year

The four support teachers spent the first half term observing in each classroom, holding planning meetings, establishing procedures, developing a conceptual framework and producing publicity material for the Curriculum Access Pilot Scheme, or CAPS, as it was referred to. After the meetings with the school staff, during which terminology was clarified and discussed, the main focuses of the support teachers were to be:

(i) Working with teachers

It was decided that Maria (with some help from Peter) would work with the Year 6 teacher D, and Vicky (with some help from Kate) would work with the other Year 6 teacher, H.

The reasons given to the classteachers for this decision were: both classes had experienced a series of supply teachers the year before (because of the Deputy Head's secondment and a maternity leave) with a consequence of disruption and disruptive behaviour, and there were a high number of literacy problems which needed help. During discussions with the Headteacher and the Inspectors there were suggestions that both these teachers had experienced problems in the past, particularly with discipline, and therefore were seen as in the most need of support.

Another reason voiced informally, and emphasised by the Primary Inspector before his retirement, was that the support teachers should be seen to prove their credibility in the classroom and that these two classes would certainly present a challenge. It was also decided that Maria and Vicky should support the probationary teacher, K, as it was assumed that she would have problems as a newly qualified teacher. As well as these

specific areas of support it was decided that Kate would offer general classroom support and observation in Year 3 and Peter would do likewise in Year 5.

(ii) The library and resources

The school's library and general resources stock were striking in their drabness, lack of organisation and the amount of books which were inappropriate for the age, interest range, and the ethnic diversity of children within the school. Peter and Kate were very interested in resource organisation, computerised cataloguing systems and frequently reiterated their espousal of 'resource-based' learning. These two support teachers, therefore, gave priority to creating a new library in a different room, ordering books for this and for all classrooms, discussing with all teachers their resource needs for forthcoming curriculum plans and working towards holding a Book Week during the autumn term. These plans involved working closely with G who was the library postholder at the time. It was also envisaged, although not made explicit to the school as a whole, that teachers would be trained by Peter and Kate into curriculum planning for 'resource-based learning'.

(iii) In-service and staff development for class teachers

The Appraisal Report, the HMI visit and Borough reading tests revealed the extent of literacy problems within C School. At least one third of the children going onto secondary school had not achieved a functional literacy standard, which was taken within the Borough to be a 9.0 year reading age. These problems were seen by the support teachers to emanate from the style of teaching English in the school which was based on one formal reading scheme, Ginn 360, and English workbooks 'Sound Sense' which had been produced in the 1950s. The support teachers felt that priority should be given to changing the school's approach to the teaching of reading through whole staff discussions and in-service sessions. These were to be set up throughout the year, and Vicky and Maria would also carry out one-to-one staff development with individual teachers.

Comment

At the end of this first half term, before the classroom based work began, some issues seemed to be emerging as a result of inconsistencies and tensions with the project. A considerable amount of time was spent by the support teachers out of classrooms in meetings or resource organisation. The main focus during this half term appeared to be

the library and resources rather than the instigation of curriculum development with the ensuing changes in the quality of education for children with special educational needs. Some more specific issues which will contribute to later analysis are given below:

- (i) There appeared to be a mismatch between the team's stated beliefs about working in partnership with the class teachers and their apparent non-response to requests for help with specific children, and requests to 'show us how it's done'.
- (ii) The proposals for the focus of work in C School appeared to be based on the strengths and interests of the support teachers rather than on the needs, interests and strengths of the class teachers.
- (iii) Remoteness of the support team from the class teachers could be perceived in the following ways: meetings in houses of support teachers; meetings at the Learning Support Centre which was two and a half miles away from C School; use of academic styles and jargon in written papers and in discussion.
- (iv) Special educational needs was only addressed explicitly in writing by the support teachers after questions from the English Inspector and the Head of Service. In general discussion, however, the classroom teachers' main concern was children with difficulties, especially behavioural problems.
- (v) Over the first half term the team began to take on wider interests in the school, e.g. secondary liaison, educational psychologist's case conferences, supporting the Headteacher in school management, liaison with the infant school in the same building, making contact with the recycling centre to provide resources, visiting the Afro-Caribbean Resource Centre to provide films and resources for the school. The class teachers, particularly those in Year 6, frequently expressed concern over the small amount of time planned for presence in their rooms.
- (vi) The children who had been targeted and given individual support by the previous support teachers received no direct help with their learning and/or behaviour during this half term. Three of these children in Year 6 were the subjects of the Educational Psychologist's statementing process.
- (vii) The support teachers continued to emphasise that this was a pilot scheme from which they wished to develop future models of working. One could speculate that this would not have provided a very reassuring model for teachers whose morale was low.

4.4 Working with the classroom teachers

This section will examine the work of the support teachers in relation to the classroom teachers D and H, in Year 6. It will give an account of the work over the autumn and spring terms, the nature of the project having changed in the summer term as will be seen in a later section. Evidence to support the account comes from sources stated in 4.3 above, with individual modifications given in each section if appropriate.

4.4.1 Working with D

After the first half term break Peter and Maria planned to work with D in the Year 6 classroom for two days a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays. I acted as a non-participant observer making fieldnotes during the second half of Tuesday mornings and the first half of the afternoon, and occasionally on Thursday mornings. Notes were made of informal conversations between myself and D, and myself and Peter and Maria with regard to planning, preparation, evaluation and discussions on individual children. Notes were also made on informal conversations conducted in the staffroom or classroom at which I was present. My observations focused on: (4.4.2) collaboration in planning between D and the support teachers, particularly Maria and Peter; (4.4.3) co-operative teaching by D and the support teachers; (4.4.4) attention received by children with special needs, or rather, those children who had been withdrawn by the support teachers during the previous year, Matthew and Sandra.

4.4.2 Planning and preparation

During interviews and discussions D had expressed views about his own need for help as a classroom teacher:

I always feel I'm weak in all areas of the curriculum. I'm not strong in any. I ask myself am I good enough to be a teacher. I don't really know.I'd love to have a go at movement and drama, have a try. I haven't got the confidence. Even my own thing, Integrated Studies, it's difficult considering the multicultural basis of it.....not enough work done on it to make teachers feel confident.

(Cassette recording of interview 24th July)

D acknowledged that he fully understood the changing model of the support service but spoke in favourable terms of his work with the previous support teachers. He also gave his reflections on previous attempts to change the work within the school:

*It's all right coming in and chatting with us, telling us great ideas, but how do I get these children working this way? How do we in the school get together as a team? How do we **do** these things?*

(Cassette recording of informal interview 23rd September)

From these interviews, and from subsequent conversations, D appeared ready for advice and support on teaching his class. D continued to belittle his own abilities as a teacher during informal discussions in the staffroom. Remarks such as *'I'm beginning to think I do everything wrong this year'* (18.11 Staffroom 10.35-1055 a.m.) were made quite often by D to colleagues.

A half-term review meeting between the support team and the Headteacher produced detailed plans for working with D. These plans contained points such as:

3.3 It has been negotiated and agreed that all the CAPS team should work with D on a new 'process' curriculum model with the children. This has grown from an examination of classroom procedures, organisation, physical layout, (i.e. furniture, activity areas, storage etc.) and methodology.

3.4 Agreement has been reached on the following points:

(a) That the children be taught the skills to enable them to play an active part in planning their own learning. They will negotiate and plan their own work for each day subject to agreed procedures with the class teacher or support staff...

(b) A record profile that children fill out and keep will be used in conjunction with a diary/think book, containing their daily planning to monitor their progress.

(c) This individual autonomous working will be used as the foundation from which partner and co-operative group working will be built by D and the CAPS team.

(d) Small group activity will be the basis for tuition, together with whole class presentations and one-to-one support as appropriate. The CAPS support teachers have agreed to introduce these procedures to the children, group by group. It is envisaged that a gradual introduction to this method would enjoy better success.

(e) It is intended to reorganise the classroom layout into activity base areas for maths, language, science, art/CDT, reading etc. will [sic] facilitate this methodology and the CAPS support teachers will assist D to this end.

(Minutes 11th November)

These plans were intended to form the basis of the work which Peter and Maria intended to do with D. Almost immediately Peter reduced the amount of time spent with D to two half days a week in order to fulfil the increasing demands of reorganising the library.

During the autumn term there appeared to be little opportunity for collaborative planning between the support teachers and D. For example, the children's self-monitoring sheets were introduced by Peter who had prepared them using the media facilities of the borough's Curriculum Development Support Unit and had not shown them to D before being given to the children. D said afterwards, during an informal conversation, that he was still not sure what autonomous learning was. Peter recommended several books written by his M.A. tutor. In the spring term it was decided that the whole of Year 6 would do topic work on the theme of 'Survival'. The four support teacher, D and H spent around thirty minutes during the first week of the spring term agreeing to the plans

which Peter had devised for promoting individual and group autonomy through setting groups tasks around the theme of survival. The support teachers took over Year 6 as supply teachers in order to release D and H to visit the ecological centre to which the children were going to be taken.

Comment

Although D was included in general staff meetings and had read the individual CAPS papers produced by the team, he spent almost no time with Peter and Maria planning specifically for his classroom. Curriculum content was agreed upon, particularly for the spring term. Organisational issues were not planned, nor were the ethos of the classroom and the style of interaction with the pupils addressed. Some of the points raised under 4.3.2 Comment section can again be raised, along with one or two more specific issues:

- (i) There appeared to be a mismatch between support teachers' stated beliefs about partnership and their failure to address D's expressions of insecurity and helplessness, or to seriously consider his strengths and weaknesses. D had been a foremost proponent of requesting 'expert' teachers to show him successful classroom practice but this request appeared to be dismissed by the support service without any explanation as to why it may have been felt to be inappropriate.
- (ii) The detailed plans for working with D emerged from a meeting with the Headteacher, a factor which, given the tensions between management and staff in this school, could be seen to have reduced D's faith in these plans.
- (iii) Peter's diversity of interests, and to some extent the study demands on Maria, could be seen to limit the amount of time spent on both planning and working with individual teachers.

4.4.3 Co-operative teaching - D and the support teachers

The notion of 'co-operative teaching' appeared to be an important concept for the way in which Peter and Maria planned to work with D. During the Tuesday morning sessions that I observed (2.11, 9.11, 16.11, 23.11, 22.1, 29.1, 24.2, 12.3) D spent a considerable amount of time out of the classroom, from 42 minutes out of 70 minutes during the first session when Peter introduced the concept of autonomous planning and reviewing work to the children, to an average of 15 minutes during other sessions. Apart from an initial

statement that he was going to get some paper. D gave no explanations for his leaving the classroom. Peter explained all the organisational changes to the children and it was during these explanations that D most often absented himself. D had almost always left the classroom before Peter and Maria dismissed the children for lunch. There was no discussion of the lesson between the support teachers and the classroom teacher.

At the beginning of the spring term the two Year 6 classes met together in H's room for the introductory session of the topic on 'Survival'. D talked about the topic for 25 minutes. When the children returned to their own classroom Peter and Maria organised the grouping and seating of the children for the beginning of work on the new topic. During later observations Maria, or Maria and Peter, appeared to be responsible for starts, finishes and transitions within the sessions. When the support teachers worked with D they took the part of the classteacher and D sat with various individuals and groups of children. The support teachers also appeared to take responsibility for order and control within the classroom.

Comment

Several earlier lessons appeared to be in the nature of demonstrations in that Peter introduced his organisational ideas on autonomy and self-evaluation while D and Maria sat and listened with the children. D spent a considerable amount of time away from the classroom during the time the support teachers were there, thus possibly negating any possible learning from watching Peter or Maria. The following points contribute towards analysis of the partnership between the support teachers and D:

- (i) Were the support teachers responding to D's request to show him 'how it's done', and if so, would joint evaluation and discussion of the lessons have been helpful?
- (ii) Was D expressing his formerly voiced sense of helplessness by leaving the room and by leaving much of the organisational decision making to Peter and Maria?
- (iii) Did D understand the principles behind what Peter and Maria were aiming for and could these principles have been more clearly shared? It appeared that D was learning about the change in classroom processes devised by the support team at the same time as the children.
- (iv) It often appeared that instead of teaching co-operatively, the support teacher and D were teaching in parallel.

4.4.4 The children with special educational needs in D's class

During the school year before the involvement of the CAPS team two children had been withdrawn for extra help with their reading from what had then been Year 5. Sandra (11.0 years at the beginning of the research) and Matthew (10.3 years) went across the playground to the Learning Resources Centre for two forty-five minute sessions per week. These two children had been identified during a borough-wide reading survey (carried out the year before by the Learning Support Service) as being non-readers, that is, scoring below 6.0 years, on both the Young's Reading Test and the London Reading Test.

Although the initial working paper of the CAPS team made it clear that there was to be no withdrawal for individual children, and that support for children with special educational needs would take the form of group consultancy, joint curriculum planning, monitoring of children's classroom progress and project initiatives to benefit all children, in D's Year 6 class Maria and Peter planned to focus on Matthew and Sandra when working in the room. After a few weeks it became obvious that another boy, Leroy, also had considerable literacy problems and needed an equal amount of support.

During my observations of the work of the support teachers in this class I focused particularly on Sandra, Matthew and Leroy during one session per half term, targeting the amount of time on task, the nature of the task and the degree of individual help received. During other sessions I monitored these focuses more informally. I recorded semi-structured interviews with these children three times over the year. I set out the results of my focused observations of the children below (lessons lasted approximately 60 to 75 minutes):

Session 1	Before STs	Sandra	10 minutes	art
			40	cleaning table
			25	puzzling over maths - no instructions
		Matthew	65 minutes	did 4 simple sums
			10	opened workbook (thrown on table by D) did not start
Session 2	S Ts in class	Sandra	40 minutes	painting
			9 minutes	listening to tape (no book)
			20	played with paint pots
		Matthew/ Leroy	40 minutes	worked with Maria on curriculum profiles
			30	ate sweets/played computer game

Session 3	Maria in class	Sandra	45 minutes	cleaning art table
			10	splatter painting
			5	painting/doodling
		Matthew/ Leroy	40 minutes	maths workbook (given out by D)
			10	making paper aeroplanes (not part of lesson)
Session 4	S Ts in class	Sandra	absent	
		Matthew/ Leroy	10 minutes	tracing drawings from a book
			20	arguing with other children that they had not traced
			10	ripping up paper
			5	read with Maria
		Leroy	20	listened to Maria in book corner
		Matthew	20	wandered round room

During my first interviews with the children (25.11) we discussed the work they were doing, their views of themselves as learners, the help they had received previously, and how they felt about the current support they were receiving. I talked to Sandra by herself, and to Matthew and Leroy together. Sandra could describe the list of activities that she had had to do that morning. She also related how she stayed in during most breaktimes to clean the art and craft table, and then sit in the reading corner. When the other children came back into class they gave her a headache. She talked about how she and Matthew went to Mrs. - for extra help last year, and how much she enjoyed getting out of the classroom noise. She then went on to talk about Mr. I (the previous support teacher:

Mr. I. Yes, he teached me. He used to play games with us, and we used to get really fond of him and when he finally goes we get a bit bored and then we won't work with other teachers 'cos we want to work with Mr. I all the time.

Sandra also said that Miss D (Maria) was a lot of help:

She learns me to read and that, and she helps me and Ann, most of all the time, 'cos she always used to pick me and Ann (she is good at reading). Most of all the children are good at reading.

Sandra also related how much she was helped by other girls in the class, particularly by her friend Ann. She reiterated that Mr. I was her favourite teacher and how much she had enjoyed going to the Learning Support Centre.

Matthew and Leroy did not speak to any great extent about their experiences of being supported in their learning. They were more aware of the kinds of stories they enjoyed and saw Maria as a source of interesting recommendations, and a key figure to read to them. Matthew remembered his sessions with Mr. I enthusiastically, but preferred to stay in the classroom where interesting diversions went on.

During the second set of interviews (12.2) we discussed the work they had been doing this term and their view of the help they were receiving in class. Matthew and Leroy could describe the visit to the Museum of Mankind in detail, especially the film they had seen. They appeared to be unaware that the Amazon was a river. This was the first outing they had ever been on with the school. When asked what follow work they had done in class Leroy replied, *'We asked to write about the Amazon but we had to do maths and spelling and that'*. In discussing support received in class both Matthew and Leroy said that Miss D (Maria) helped them with maths, sometimes, and helped them to make things.

Matthew described how she helped with reading:

She just says the work we don't know, right, she lets us go on, past it, carry on reading the story, she goes back over to the word we don't know, just think about what the word is.

Matthew said that Mr. T (Peter) helped the other 'naughty' boys mostly, but sometimes helped them to make models. They were very resentful of the amount of attention demanded by the behaviour of one or two otherwise bright boys and seemed to realise that this attention was diverted from their own learning needs.

During a brief discussion with Sandra, a week later (19.2) I asked her if she liked having the extra teachers in her classroom. She replied:

Yes, it helps us, 'cos it's like Mr. - (D), he shouts at the boys, he can't really concentrate on something with the girls and something with the boys. Then we get muddled up.

She talked about the play she had written about the Amazon. As none of the other children would let them work on the class play, Sandra and her friend Ann made up their own. Sandra said that when they showed it to 'Sir' (D) he said it *'was a load of rubbish'* and ripped it up and threw it in the bin. I did not verify this with D.

Comment

From my observations of and discussions with these children it would appear that the following issues may be identified for further discussion:

- (i) The introduction by the support teachers of autonomous, group-based learning, moving from activity to activity, could appear to enable Sandra, Matthew and Leroy to avoid specific tasks unless working directly with one of the support teachers. Their coverage of the curriculum could, therefore, have become rather unbalanced, especially as D did not appear to be endorsing this style of learning with the children.
- (ii) Children such as Sandra, who found the social milieu of the classroom difficult, had very positive perceptions of withdrawal by a sympathetic teacher to a quiet, pleasant environment. It appeared to be difficult for either Maria or Peter to offer any kind of sustained support as a substitute, or to open the way for D to work in such a way with individual children.
- (iii) Although the concept of topic work had been introduced, the children appeared to be doing work from the same maths and English workbooks and much of the curriculum content was unchanged.
- (iv) Sandra, and to some extent Matthew and Leroy, resented the time spent by the support teachers with the other children in the class, particularly the noisy, able boys, who were very attention demanding. This appeared to be necessary, however, as D was not able to contain these boys when the support teachers were present.
- (v) One of the major ways in which the children used the support teachers was to 'translate' the complexity of work instructions, classroom procedures and language used during lessons. This simplification process, however, did not appear to form the basis of preparation or discussion with D at any time, nor did it feature in the CAPS team planning.

4.4.5 Working with D - a summary

Observing D's classroom at the end of the spring term it was difficult to identify a great deal of permanent impact made by the support teachers. The rearrangements which had taken place during the first weeks that Peter and Maria spent in the room, such as the establishment of an attractive, well-resourced, reading corner, greater cleanliness and tidiness, stimulating wall display, and tables in groups of six, were not so noticeable. There were wall displays following up the Museum of Mankind visit which had been put up by Peer. The book corner was reorganised every Tuesday by Maria. D had not taken over the responsibility of maintaining his own classroom in a different way.

When the CAPS project was suggested to the school D was vociferous in his expectations and demands for being shown 'how to do it', as seen in minutes of staff meetings and interviews. The CAPS team asserted strongly that they wished to work in partnership with the class teachers using a consultative model. Looking back over the first two terms of the research, when the most concentrated work went on in D's classroom, one could speculate as to the difference in perceptions of the role of support teaching on the parts of Peter, Maria and D. and the effect these differing perceptions may have had on the outcome in terms of provision for children with special educational needs. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

4.5 Working with H

After the first half term break Vicky and Kate planned to work with H in his Year 6 class for two days a week. Kate was expecting to spend some of this time working in the new library but Vicky would continue to work in class. I planned to act as a non-participant observer making fieldnotes during one of the mornings. As H seldom visited the staffroom, went off the premises for lunch, and mostly left school at the same time as the children, it was difficult to find time for informal conversations in the same way as I had with D.

4.5.1 Collaboration in planning and teaching - H and the support teachers

H was a very quiet person who communicated little either with colleagues or with the CAPS team. During my initial interview with him he gave very brief answers. He did, however, state that he was very happy to have help in his class from anyone. He understood initially that the team were coming to work with the 'difficult children' although he said he had become confused by the project emphasis on the library and resources.

During the four mornings I spent in H's class (in the second half of the autumn term) I only saw Vicky working, as Kate spent Thursdays organising resources in the library. These sessions were mainly focused on mathematics, H's speciality, particularly near the beginning of this observation period. During the first two sessions it appeared that discussion had not taken place between H and Vicky as to the nature of their collaboration for the session. Worksheets prepared by H posed problems for the majority of children owing to the lack of clarity in the instructions, for example:

Join the decimal points eg. $0.9 < > 9/10$

$2\ 6/10 > 26/10 > 2.6$

Vicky focused on the two boys who were identified as having special educational needs (see next section) and also spent some time trying to divert the interests of a group of five or six children who were particularly disruptive. By the end of both these sessions no children were doing mathematics.

The later sessions (2.12, 9.12) saw the children seated in groups of varying sizes, doing a variety of activities from working on maths textbooks to making their own fiction books

and listening to cassettes and books. Vicky moved from group to group, particularly encouraging those working on book-making, and reading the language in the maths textbooks for the children. H remained seated at this desk, where a few children went to have their work marked. After forty five minutes all the children in the room were on task in both sessions, although disrupted towards the end of the last session by boys from the neighbouring classroom (D's).

These sessions had been organised jointly by Vicky and H. During assembly they had decided which children would work on which tasks. Vicky had initiated the bookmaking the week before. Vicky commented (during an informal conversation afterwards) that she had found it difficult to discuss forthcoming work with H as he was used to deciding what to teach when he got into the classroom. The children mostly did work from Fletcher maths books, 'Into English' and 'Sound Sense' in the mornings. Vicky intended to introduce new reading books into the room and had begun to do whole class lessons based on literature. These were done as demonstration lessons during the second half of the autumn term.

During the spring term both Year 6 classes worked on the Survival topic, with visits to the Museum of Mankind and to the ecology centre to simulate wilderness experience. I did not see the children working on this topic although there was evidence in their exercise books of the same kinds of discussions and work which had gone on in D's class. Vicky and Kate had run the preparatory lessons for this topic with H looking on. The topic of Survival had emerged from planning discussions within the CAPS team. H, along with D, had been informed about what was planned and consulted about his opinion on this. He appeared willing to go along with any plans.

During my spring term observations there appeared to be little collaboration between Vicky, Kate and H in either planning or teaching. For the language lessons when she was scheduled to work in this class Vicky provided her own materials and books. As H was the maths postholder neither Vicky nor Kate intended to change the lesson content. They did, however, introduce the concept of differentiation, a new idea for H. This was implemented by the use of workcards, photocopied pages from workbooks and obtaining books at lower levels from other classes. H was prepared to have the children working in groups when one of the CAPS team was in the room with him. He told me during one

lesson that normally, that is, when he was on his own, the children sat in rows and all worked on the same lesson.

4.5.2 Children with special educational needs in H's class

During the previous year, two children from this class had gone across the playground to the Learning Support Centre for two forty five minute sessions a week: Ian (11.0 years old at the beginning of the research) and Donald (10.8). Ian's reading age (Young's Reading Test) was below 6.0 when previously tested. Frequently absent from school, he was distracted and victimised by the other children when present. Donald was a tall, African boy, who spoke little and had frequent temper tantrums, a possible way of deflecting attention from his difficulties with reading and mathematics. Both boys were at the beginning of the formal statementing process. Over the year I interviewed Ian twice. Donald refused to be interviewed. During two of my observations of H's class I noted particularly the general activities of these boys without exact timing, and also noted the interactions between them and the support teachers.

First focused session (25.11): Vicky was working as support teacher to H. Donald and Ian were doing separate maths work, neither of them able to read the language of the workbook ('Fletcher Maths' scheme). Ian sat for most of the time (one and a quarter hours) staring into space, tapping his pencil, giggling with the girls seated near him, and occasionally going over to the bin to sharpen his pencil. No one approached him to offer help and he requested no help. Donald tried to work out what to do with little apparent success. He then stood up and stamped around in frustration. His exercise book was full and he did not know how to obtain a new one. Two other boys frequently interfered with Donald's table and prevented him from using the pencil sharpener. Donald was reprimanded by H, and then sat in a sulk for the rest of the session.

In the afternoon of this session I interviewed Ian. My aim (as previously with Matthew and Sandra) was to find out Ian's perceptions of the lessons he had been doing that morning, of the support he got in class, and his views on previous support at the Learning Resources Centre. Ian's replies were mostly monosyllabic and he appeared to have little idea of what had gone on that morning. He could describe his sessions at the Learning Support Centre (which he called the reading centre) from the previous year:

We came back up after play and we went to the reading centre. We played games in the reading centre. I used to read pop-up books.

Ian was quite certain that he would rather be taught at the reading centre as it was 'boring' in class and they only did 'rubbish' work. He would, however, rather stay at home as he disliked school.

Second focused session (9.12): Vicky had organised this lesson. Ian was working with a girl on making books. These two remained on task, cutting and sticking until disrupted by boys from the next class. Ian then started to vandalise the work of other children until his partner forced him back to his work. Donald was trying to do maths from a workcard but soon gave up and wandered quietly round the room to look at what others were doing (groups doing different activities for this session). Vicky spent time going from group to group and spent about five minutes with Ian, and about the same time explaining the work requirement to Donald.

During the session when the Survival topic was introduced, including a talk about the forthcoming trip to the ecology centre, Ian spent the whole time facing the wall and took no part in the lesson. Donald looked interested but knew he would not be allowed to go by his mother. After the trip I spoke to Ian informally in class; he was unaware of the name of the centre he had visited and of the purpose of examining strategies for survival. He said it was 'rubbish'.

Summarising this section, it is possible to see how little contact took place between Ian and Donald and either the class teacher or the support teachers. The numbers of disruptive children took up most of the attention of Vicky and Kate. H provided no differentiated work for these boys and appeared to give little individual help. The only educational experience that was not dismissed as 'rubbish' by Ian was his work in the 'Reading Centre' the previous year; it was also the only educational experience he could talk about in detail. It was reported to me by Donald's previous support teachers that he appeared to visit the Support Centre with enjoyment and never caused any trouble or disruption.

4.5.3 Summary

On my first visit to H's classroom (a large room, usually containing fewer than twenty children) the desks were arranged in rows facing a blackboard. As a result of discussion with the support teachers, and the decisions made about Year 6, by the end of the autumn

term the desks had been moved into groups and a reading corner had been created. By this time also, the children were working in groups, on varied activities, when support teacher(s) were present. Some of the books made by the children were being displayed. During the spring term the influence of the support teachers appeared to wane in terms of the appearance of the classroom, as the desks reverted to rows, an arrangement that H made no secret about preferring. This could perhaps be said to symbolise the influence of the support teachers on this classroom. Despite an influx of new and child-made books, and some lessons centred around literature, given by Vicky, there was little evidence of H adopting any different pedagogical style or curriculum content unless the support teachers were there. The excitement of joint Year 6 trips did not appear to be maintained throughout the spring term. The few comments that H made during the lessons indicated his feelings that the children's continuing disruptive behaviour vindicated his resistance to change as he knew nothing would work with this class.

Comment

From this look at the work of the support teachers in H's class, the following issues are noted for later discussion:

- (i) H did not appear to engage in the process of classroom change which the support teachers were trying to instigate: this was paralleled by a lack of engagement in school activities as a whole.
- (ii) The fact that the two support teachers were female, and appeared to be assertive, may have created difficulties in their work with H as he appeared to be shy and reticent.
- (iii) The support teachers were diverted by the considerable amount of disruptive behaviour in this class from focusing on the needs of Ian and Donald, whose learning and behavioural difficulties were considerable and who received no other kind of support. They were, therefore, acting as a service for a different kind of emergency than originally intended.
- (iv) Throughout my brief interactions with H it was apparent that he considered the focus of Vicky and Kate to be on the children rather than on his mode of teaching (unlike D who acknowledged the need for change). One could speculate that this was simply because no one made it clear to him the real purpose of the support teachers' presence. On the other hand, his minimal attendance at meetings and his few visits to the staffroom made it difficult for him to absorb the general ethos of proposed change.

4.6 The library and resources

A major strand of the CAPS team's work in C School was the focus on upgrading the library and resource collection, with the intention of providing the means for 'Resource-based learning and teaching'. Although this account of the development of the library and resources reveals few direct glimpses of the partnerships between the support teachers and the classroom teachers, it does give some insight into the CAPS team's perception of the best means of supporting the school.

As stated earlier Peter and Kate were very interested in resource organisation, including computerised cataloguing systems, and gave priority to creating a new library in a different room, ordering books for this and for all the classrooms, discussing with all teachers their resource needs for forthcoming curriculum plans and working towards holding a book week during the year. On examining the minutes of early meetings and notes on formal and informal discussions it is possible to see how the focus on resources and the library emanated from the interests of Peter and Kate, and the literature interests of Vicky and Maria. Before the project began the library gave the appearance of being neglected and seldom used by either teachers or children. This library had been created three years earlier by G, assisted by E, who kept much of the AVA resources in there.

From an examination of the team's weekly diaries and from observation of the team's activities it can be seen that a substantial amount of time was spent, especially by Peter and Kate, working on the development of a new library. The first half-term review written by the CAPS team and the Headteacher described how an assessment of current book stock had been undertaken, remaining stock had been classified and a new catalogue started. This had been done in consultation with G (library postholder) and E (AVA postholder). G and Vicky were about to begin the purchase of new books. The team continued to spend the three afternoons allocated to the project mainly concentrating on resources. Below is an extract from the diary kept by the team and can be seen as a typical example:

Thurs. 27th p.m. V contacted supplies department regarding Remploi's fitting of library resources shelving and electrical needs. Mr. M has left, so considerable difficulty experienced. P and M moved delivery parcels from entrance hall to library resources before anything should stray.

(CAPS Diary 24-28.11 Scribe Vicky)

While the spring term saw a continuation of work on resources and the library, the work of the team in the afternoon became more diverse. A list of activities carried out by the

team during this term included: nine visits to book shops to purchase books; researching TES articles for an INSET pack; meeting with Schools' Library Service; visits to other schools, on request, to discuss resources and library; preparation of INSET material on reading. A report presented to the Governors' meeting at the beginning of the spring term gave extensive details of what had been done in the library, including acknowledgements throughout that the new resources centre had been created by Mr. G and Mr. E and the CAPS team. Around £4,500 was spent on furniture, carpets, shelving and books. It had been intended to finish this part of the project by the end of the first half term in school but it was not completed by the end of the second term.

Comment

My analysis of the minutes and cassette recordings of meetings reveals a dichotomous approach towards the style and meaning of negotiation between the support teachers and the school staff. Openly invited to enter into negotiation and state their needs during meetings, and on written statement papers, the school staff nevertheless made no contribution to the decision to focus on developing a new library and reorganising resources.

Some of the specific inconsistencies and tensions which emerge from the involvement with library provision, and which may contribute to a later analysis of issues are:

- (i) Before the project began the support teachers and the class teachers appeared to have different agenda in mind regarding the needs of the school and the children. It is not possible to find evidence of both agenda being negotiated or discussed with reference to library and resource provision.
- (ii) It did not appear that former contributions, sense of ownership, pride and personal feelings on the part of teachers previously involved with the library were taken into account. This, together with the use of an outside librarian who had produced a very critical report as consultant to the project, could be judged to reveal some insensitivity.
- (iii) The amount of time spent by the CAPS team in the library, buying books and so on, was considerable compared to the time available to the teachers, whose time seldom amounted to more than twenty minutes non-contact time per week. This may have appeared inequitable to the class teachers, and did nothing to further the professional development of the class teachers in this area.
- (iv) In the documentation produced on resources and the library there was no reference to special educational needs per se.

4.7 In-service and staff development

The third major focus of involvement by the support team was that of in-service provision and staff development. Looking back at the 'Initial Proposals' document it is possible to identify the origins of this focus.

As a Service our focus is usually on children with special educational needs. Enhanced chances of success can be given to these pupils through changes in teacher attitudes, school organisation and curriculum presentation. These changes improve the education of all pupils. (Para. 1.1)
The initial stage of the project will consist of agreeing goals with staff of the school. This may well entail lengthy in-service/discussion processes before we come to agreed goals. (Para. 2.1)

This section will give an account of in-service and staff development provision arranged or given by the CAPS team over the autumn and spring terms of the project. This includes some informal discussions which took place in the staff room during the 20 to 30 minutes when the Headteacher occasionally took singing practice on Tuesday mornings, structured lunch time sessions and after-school sessions to which an outside speaker was invited. It also includes a brief look at curriculum planning sessions, which were regarded as a form of staff development by the CAPS team. The account is supported by data from field notes made during these sessions, cassette recordings of the planned sessions, minutes or general notes on planned sessions.

Informal staff development

The CAPS team generally joined the staff in the staffroom during non-contact time. Although conversations were normally low key, sometimes serious professional matters arose and a response from the team appeared to be expected. B, the deputy head, frequently related anecdotes about his own strategies for controlling children with behavioural difficulties and then appeared to challenge the CAPS team through further anecdotes about outsiders having been unable to cope with the children in this school. Peter mostly responded by saying that all the control in the world does not mean that learning is taking place, and that children developed self respect and self control through teachers respecting children. He then went on to explain some of the psychological theories underpinning different approaches towards discipline.

Another regular topic of conversation was reading, and the ways in which children learnt to read. The school staff discussed the apparent lack of enthusiasm for reading on the part of the children. Most of the teachers believed that reading schemes were the only

way to teach children, and that formal grammar and English exercises were the way to improve literacy. Vicky often challenged these ideas quite forcefully and was supported particularly by Maria. There were other times when the CAPS team entered into serious discussion about educational issues. From my notes, and from an impressionistic view, it was mostly Peter, on the subject of resources, curriculum or politics, or Vicky, on the subject of reading and writing, who took part in these informal discussions. Vicky took these informal discussions very seriously and frequently followed them up with the provision of materials or articles to support her points.

It is difficult to gauge the extent to which these informal sessions might have made any impact on the staff. They did, however, appear to influence the planning of future, more formal, sessions. After the staff had gone back to their classrooms the CAPS team would often continue with the same theme raised during discussion and speculate on how to change the views of the teachers, mainly through INSET or provision of packs of materials such as articles or chapters from books.

In-service sessions

During the first half of the autumn term the meetings between the whole school and the CAPS team were of a clarifying and exploratory nature rather than expository. The first structured session took place in late November and focused on reviewing resources. The staff appeared interested and contributed to the discussion, apart from D, who had not completed his analysis sheets and complained that they were wasting time and that he had given the task to the 'kids'. This meeting led to structured curriculum planning sessions where two members of the CAPS team worked with the two staff from a year group while the other two support teachers took the classes. These sessions did not start until late in the spring term and were seen as planning for summer, or for the following year.

During the second half of the spring term the Headteacher ran five lunchtime meetings with the involvement of the CAPS team. These emanated from a management course and focused on getting the class teachers to forecast and plan in a structured way.

During the autumn term the CAPS team held meetings after school and at lunchtime, where they presented materials which they had been investigating for use in schools. Materials from the Afro-Caribbean Education Resources Centre and the ILEA Tape Centre provided sources of material for discussion with the staff. Vicky and Maria took some of the staff to a local book supplier to spend school capitation on fiction for the classroom.

These were all seen by the team as informal ways of supporting staff in the language policy.

Formal in-service sessions

Discussion on reading schemes and how children learned to read frequently occurred on an informal basis as we have already seen. Meetings with the Headteacher also revealed some difference in approach to children's reading. The team, therefore, invited Margaret Meek, a well known academic in the field of reading, to lead a formal, after-school, session. Vicky, a member of a small research group led by Margaret in the borough, had explained the position regarding reading schemes within the language policy, hoping that the staff would be persuaded to try other methods. There was little contribution to discussion from the teachers although all but one stayed after the designated finishing time. The Headteacher spoke about the pressures to teach in a formal way from the local authority and the governors. Afterwards, although they were polite, the class teachers did not appear to share the enthusiasm of the CAPS team towards the session.

This was the only formal session to which an out of borough speaker was invited. Other specialists such as the borough librarian and a world studies adviser gave after school sessions. During the summer term Vicky and Maria presented the Open University In-service Pack 'Children's Language and Literature'. This was intended for the school but opened up to other schools for reasons of economy. Three members (K, J and B) of C School attended the course, J dropping out after the first session.

Comment

In response to a suggestion from the English Inspector there was some staff development in the form of mutual discussion with individual teachers on particular children. Otherwise, staff development appeared to be somewhat didactic in approach; even informal discussions became starting points for what seemed like academic expositions from two members of the CAPS team. A further interesting point arising from an examination of these informal discussions is the extent to which they focused on behaviour problems and learning difficulties. Despite this, the support teachers arranged in-service focused on language and resources.

Some of the tensions and dilemmas which can be identified in this aspect of the support teachers' work are outlined here:

- (i) The keen interests of the team got in the way of a real appreciation of the class teachers' needs.
- (ii) Two of the team spoke in a very theoretical way and frequently sounded as though they were lecturing their 'audience'.
- (iii) The support teachers became involved in the Headteacher's attempts to change his staff. As they were aware of the extent of his unpopularity among his teachers one may question the wisdom of appearing to be used by him in his intention to establish his own credibility and accountability.

4.8 Summer term

The summer term in C Junior School saw a considerable shift in the mode of working by the CAPS team. At the end of the spring term the Headteacher held a meeting with the Head of the Learning Support Service to express his worries about alleged 'increased assertiveness', particularly on the part of Vicky and Maria. He felt their views were too strong and that they were spreading feminism to the Year 6 girls, who, as part of English work, had written a letter to Mrs. Thatcher expressing their dissatisfaction with educational policies. Consequently Vicky was asked to give some of her time to another school which had requested her. She and Maria would concentrate on organising a Book Carnival, to take place in late June, for the rest of their time in C School. The three female support teachers all had considerable amounts of time away for illness and job interviews, while the male teacher spent a considerable amount of time using his media skills for the Support Service as a whole. In addition, at least one half day a week during this term saw the school closed, and classes were also sent home if their teacher was absent for any reason, according to union specifications.

At the beginning of the summer term, amid this contracting focus on C School, the CAPS team's emphasis was expressed as: 1. The Book Carnival (22-26 June); 2. Completion of stocking and cataloguing library; 3. Introducing children to the mechanics of the library. Data from field notes, minutes of meetings, documents and cassette recordings provides this very brief account of these activities.

The Book Carnival

Vicky had organised very successful, borough-wide events of this nature. Her main intention, not shared overtly with the school, was to use the event as staff development by showing teachers what could be done in the area of language. Every class spent at least one half day participating in activities such as book-making, a writing area, calligraphy, listening to cassette tapes, watching videos, slides, demonstrations of other scripts, among other changing events. The children reacted enthusiastically, although one or two teachers made cynical remarks. The Book Carnival was regarded as a success, with parents and governors attending events and neighbouring schools coming to hear famous authors.

Comment

Considering the positive atmosphere generated, and the large number of activities which

the teachers appeared to adopt it was curious that this type of activity had not been done earlier in the year. The support teachers felt that the Headteacher would have been too suspicious and would not have allowed it. The planning of this event had not involved much class teacher time; their access to the mechanisms of such an event were, therefore, limited. The school had, in fact, put on a similar a year and a half before. This was not acknowledged and the potential skills of the class teachers were not exploited.

The library

By the week of the Book Carnival most of the library was finished. The appearance of the room was very attractive, with clear labelling, displays of class work, and inviting books placed on stands. During this week Peter sat in the library giving small group explanations to all the children in the school as to how the library worked, and how the children could use it autonomously.

Comment

Work on the library had taken ten months from conception. The original plans had been ambitious and of necessity tempered by resources restrictions. Nevertheless, the school now had a working library with £4,000 of new books. The very large amount of time which Peter and Kate especially had spent there could be challenged in terms of the focus of the project, that is, children with special educational needs. That will be an issue for debate later in this account. There is also the issue of the limited involvement of the classroom teachers in this process and the possible effect of this in terms of a sense of pride and ownership for future use.

4.9 The end of the year

By the beginning of July in the summer term the project appeared to be finishing as a result of what was happening to the team. Examinations, job applications and interviews, illness, commitment to spending time in a school ready for the following term and publishing demands all led to little time being spent by the support team in C School. With a concern that the project might dissolve completely I felt that it was an appropriate time to try to gauge the views of the participants about what had gone on during the year. The following sections cover the views of the CAPS team and the class teachers. My own views as the originator of the project and the evaluator come later, in Chapters 6 and 7, where they form part of the overall analysis.

4.9.1 The CAPS team

The evidence for the views of the support team came from the following sources: fieldnotes taken during, or immediately after, discussion with the CAPS team, analysis of a paper produced by the team reviewing their work in C School and a summary of responses by the support teachers to an open questionnaire.

During an informal, lunchtime conversation the CAPS team were open in expressing some reservations about the effectiveness of the project over the year. The main points which emerged from this discussion were: a lack of support from borough management and their own manager, the difficulties with the management problems of the school, certain teachers who were regarded to be beyond their help, and other teachers whose apparent efficiency belied the small amount of learning taking place. There was a reiteration of their own beliefs in the consultancy model of support teaching which addressed the whole curriculum, and no mention of the individual needs of some children.

In contrast to this informal conversation, an examination of an article reviewing the CAPS' work over the year, written by Peter for the bulletin (ACCESS) of the Learning Support Service, gave a very positive view of the project:

....To this end four support teachers with the staff of one school have been working together to examine curriculum processes and classroom practice attempting to devise and evaluate strategies that will improve access to the child in difficulty.....

The support teacher is now more concerned with working collaboratively in the classroom, assisting in planning and helping to develop school-based in-service than ever before. CAPS is an extension of this approach.....

The team approach adopted by CAPS has enabled us to give a more concentrated and higher level of support to the school concerned, so that together the schools

*and support teachers can find real time to develop curriculum and staff development programmes that will make change possible....
CAPS does not claim startling successes, but the modest change prompted in certain areas of concern, in the development of library resources, reading, and curriculum planning have provided staff with the opportunity for further development....*

(p.7 ACCESS ALSS June 1987)

The fourth paragraph in the extract above suggested that there could be some doubt as to the degree of success achieved by this approach. The '*certain areas of concern*' did not appear to embrace the behavioural and learning difficulties apparent in so many of the children in Year 6 of C School.

While this publicity presented a very positive experience, it was possible to identify many tensions and concerns about the year in the written responses from the CAPS team, as follows. After my informal discussion we decided that written responses would be a measured, reflective way of looking back over the year so I prepared a set of open questions, eliciting views of various aspects of the project (see Chapter 3 for further explanation of methodology). One member of the team failed to return this document despite several telephone calls and written requests. Another's responses were very brief as s/he was reluctant to commit his/her views to paper. The others wrote extensive amounts. An example of one of these responses is provided in Appendix 5.

The following is a distillation of their views. The questions were influenced by what I had asked at the beginning of the year, and by my perceptions of what had happened during the autumn and winter terms. Below, I have used the questions as headings, with some abbreviations.

(i) Was the way in which you worked as part of the CAPS team different from the way you had worked before as a member of the support service?

All three answered yes.

If it was different, could you give specific details of these differences?

Two support teachers (ST) felt that planning in consultation with support colleagues was different, as was taking an overview of the whole school. One ST emphasised the extent of the advisory/consultancy role as being new. One ST felt that the money available enabled them to make an impact that was not usually possible. All three respondents felt there was an opportunity to work more coherently on the curriculum.

(ii) Why do you think change in the approaches to supporting children with special educational needs have occurred?

All three STs mentioned failure of the 'remedial' model, the Warnock Report and the subsequent 1981 Education Act. Two STs also wrote about the concept of access, equating special needs with race, gender and class in terms of institutional responses.

(iii) Describe the ideal relationship with classroom teachers which would make the work of support teachers increasingly effective.

All three STs stipulated more time to observe, to plan and evaluate jointly, and to follow up. One ST particularly stressed the need for '*open, honest communication from a position of equal status*' and the production of contracts to work together '*sharing management of a classroom with a truly child-centred curriculum*'.

(iv) What kind of constraints do you feel were operating during your work with the CAPS team?

The three respondents felt that the school had different expectations from the CAPs team, in that the class teachers saw the project as being to change the children, about whom (mentioned by one ST) there was deep-rooted cynicism as to the likelihood of educational, personal or social success, whereas two STs saw the project as being both a pilot-scheme for a new way of working, and as a means to change the teachers and the school. One ST felt that the image of the support service was not one of being a '*proper teacher*', that is, one who could manage a class. Two STs commented on the weaknesses in time-keeping and attendance on the part of two of the team, thereby appearing to reduce the credibility of the project.

(v) Could you please describe the role which you thought you were going to be carrying out during the project?

One ST gave details about collaborative teaching, advice and consultation and in-service. Two STs wrote about change and crisis management, and about learning for teachers and children. One wrote about facilitating feelings that both (teachers and children) were in control of their own learning.

(vi) Do you feel your work during the year differed from the original conception of your role? If you do feel this way, could you please give specific details of the ways in which it differed?

The three respondents felt their work differed from the original conception. Two elaborated this by stating that the responsibility was given over to the STs or *we fell into the trap of DOING*. They both felt that staff stood back and waited to be told. Collaborative working with staff was intermittent.

(vii) Please give your opinion as to how the school could be changed further to bring about more effective educational outcomes, particularly with regard to children with SEN.

All three STs felt that: there were problems with the management of the school which needed to be addressed before implementing any further policies; that the class teachers held very low expectations of the children.

(viii) Do you feel that success was achieved by (a) you personally, (b) the CAPS team during the year? If so, could you please give specific details, no matter how small any kind of achievement may have appeared.

One ST recognised his/her own personal development in terms of developing skills of negotiation, communication, designing and delivering in-service, supporting intellectual debate within the team (mentioned by all three respondents). They had all become involved in team and collaborative planning on a more consistent level, regarded as a major achievement in a school with such complex staff relationships. The library and resources centre were successfully established, and the Book Carnival had broadened some of the teachers' perspectives on language. The Year 6 children had gained new learning experiences and were given trust. Some teachers had been given encouragement and affirmation and space was given to the school to allow stress levels to be lowered.

(ix) Could you make some speculation as to why these successes occurred?

Only one ST answered fully here, suggesting that the team approach provided an impact which management and staff had to take notice of and that the resource provision also made an impact.

(x) Do you feel that (a) you personally and (b) the CAPS team did not achieve some of your aims? If so, could you give specific reasons why you think this might have been so?

There had been tremendous pressure for the team to be the example and the experts, which contradicted the wish to share and take a joint approach to change. One ST commented that *'it might be argued that the CAPS team should only have been involved in observation and then INSET and not attempted to 'DO' in the classroom at any level. To take away the*

teacher's responsibility even in the giving of additional time is doubtful'. Somewhat in contradiction to this, one respondent said that the project could have been improved by greater classroom practice commitment by all the CAPS team which should have 'matched the intellectual power'. They all felt that it was very difficult to influence the attitudes of established teachers whose views seemed very entrenched.

The following statement perhaps sums up the feelings of the team:

If success can be measured in terms of heightening of awareness and of the need to evaluate and change then success was achieved. If it can be measured in terms of sharing and discussing problems and attempting to help each other then some success was achieved. In terms of children with special educational needs the school has a long way to go.

(Questionnaire response 7.87)

Comment

It is difficult to summarise the views of the team as by the end of the year some commitment to the project appeared to have been lost, a factor which probably indicated the difficulty faced by the team. Several possible reasons for this could be suggested: frustration at the slow rate of change in the school; other tasks on offer more in their own fields of interest; career ambitions elsewhere; awareness of a diminishing commitment leading to possible feelings of awkwardness when in school. Other more general issues which can be identified from this section are:

- (i) The 'curriculum deficit' model of special educational needs provision which dominated the approach of the CAPS team perhaps masked the possibility of working with individual children on their own styles of learning, thereby instigating a 'trickle up' effect in classroom pedagogy.
- (ii) The CAPS team did not appear to see that while strongly advocating negotiation and partnership, they appeared to be unyielding in their own beliefs both about provision for the children concerned and about how primary classrooms should be managed. This dichotomy paralleled one whereby in their anxiety not to be perceived as 'experts' they ignored the teachers' wishes for more practical information and demonstration.
- (iii) Although the support teachers recognised that some aspects of bringing about change in this school required more power and status than they could muster, they nevertheless became involved in management and whole school issues which went beyond their original brief.

- (iv) The number of support teachers in the team appeared to make them turn towards each other rather than developing relationships within the school
- (v) With hindsight, it could be seen that the support teachers were using the differences in educational approaches between themselves and most of the staff as a reason for difficulties faced. The development of the class teachers should have been seen as the fundamental challenge which was not taken on board in any planned and systematic way.

4.9.2 The classroom teachers

The evidence for this section was collated from the class teachers' written responses to an open questionnaire (see Chapter 3, section 3.7), and from discussion. The teachers agreed to meet me for an informal discussion for thirty minutes during a lunchtime two weeks before the end of term. They specifically requested that the Headteacher should not be present. Two teachers were absent (J and F). There were no specified questions as I was anxious to elicit the opinions of the teachers. D was loud in his protestations that what the CAPS team had done did not match up with the original intentions which he interpreted as agreeing with the Primary Inspector's original proposition that *'two expert teachers should demonstrate to the rest of the school how it should be done.'* He did not feel they had been any help to him but it was not their fault. There was a general feeling that there had been no management support from the borough. The replacement Primary Inspector and the new English Inspector had not made themselves known to the school. There was also a view expressed that much more work should have been done at school management level, although several people appeared uncomfortable with such sentiments being stated in a public forum.

The written responses to my questions were a combination of positive and negative reflections on the work of the CAPS team over the year. One teacher (J) did not respond; two teachers, D and C, dictated their answers to me. One example of the nine class teachers' responses is given in Appendix 6. The following is a summary of their views:

- (i) Original intentions of the CAPS team
 - there was general agreement that the support teachers were coming in to 'improve the general ethos of the school' after the appraisal and inspection and to improve and organise the library and resources.
- (ii) Match between the original expectations and the work of the CAPS team

- library and resources were seen as a success but it would have been better to have given the class teachers the time to do this work
- it was agreed by the teacher of other years that Year 6 had benefited from the input, but overall, the view was expressed that there had been no change over the whole school.

(iii) Special educational needs - views on desirable support

- all the teachers felt that there were children with special needs in their class (average estimate 7 out of 19/20 average class size)
- when asked to rank the causes of special educational needs, factors such as the curriculum, teaching methods and school organisation were placed near the bottom of the list
- although two felt there had been no previous support, the other teachers described in detail the work of the previous support teacher
- apart from the two Year 6 teachers the others stated that there had been no support for children with special educational needs over the last year
- all the teachers said that children should be supported by a teacher from within the school; two teachers said from within and outside the school and one response said the class teacher with support
- all the respondents appeared to be happy with in-class support but said that those with extreme difficulties should be taken out for extra help

(iv) Resource provision

- all the teachers felt that resources had been improved and were able to specify how this had affected their own work, for example, *'the children now have interesting fiction books to read and they enjoy reading,' 'there has been a provision of meaningful books for the class'*
- some teachers felt that the support teachers were not necessary for such work and they would have preferred to have done it themselves
- the connection between the role of support teaching and the provision and improvement of resources was understood through the acknowledgement by six teachers that the CAPS team had supplied books and had generated a new library

(v) CAPS team's activities as contributing towards own development as a teacher

- the class teachers held very varied views as to the extent of the team's contribution in this area, exemplified by such comments as: *'...I've not changed. In fact, I feel I've*

returned to old methods. I tried what was suggested and when it failed, there was no follow up’ - D

- some teachers felt they had learned from the Book Carnival, the reorganisation of the library, from organising in advance, from planning a school visit

(vi) Ways in which children with special educational needs may have benefited from CAPS

- six teachers said there had been no benefit, including one of the Year 6 teachers
- H felt that his children had received individual help and help with behaviour problems over the two terms

(vii) Required support and future developments

- the respondents were unanimous in their request for *‘more support in the classroom with children who have learning difficulties, especially in the area of building language skills, and help with individual children rather than the class as a whole’*
- there were several comments about the inadequacy of current support for children with emotional and psychological needs
- there were requests for time during the week so that the teacher(s) could run the library

Three respondents chose to comment further: one admitted to cynicism and being totally demoralised, but then admitted that ‘it could be me’; one said s/he was confused as the *‘role and intentions of the CAPS team were continually being refined, and even changed’*; the extended comment of one teacher seems to summarise his colleague’s feelings well and is reproduced below:

The arrival of the CAPS team at C aroused a certain amount of hostility among the staff. The lack of leadership and low morale in the school generated into almost non-co-operation on the part of some teachers. The CAPS team also had to contend with two 4th year classes which became increasingly difficult. Proper consultation with the staff prior to the arrival of the CAPS team by the Head could have created a better atmosphere. Many of the Head’s ideas at staff meetings were suggested as if they were borrowed from the CAPS team. I feel that good leadership could have made much more effective use of the CAPS team in terms of the curriculum and teaching.

(Responses to written questions 8.7)

Comment

Although the class teachers did not agree on every issue there does seem to be a coherent viewpoint in many areas. Whereas the reorganisation of the library and resource provision

was acknowledged as a major contribution to the school, it is possible to detect some feelings of resentment that the CAPS team had time to do this while the class teachers did not. In terms of special educational needs provision, an individualised approach still appeared to be the overwhelmingly dominant ideology influencing these class teachers. There were difficulties, therefore, in connecting the work done by the CAPS team on curriculum planning and pedagogical change with the role of supporting individual children. Most of the teachers expressed, albeit somewhat obliquely, a feeling of dissatisfaction about the ethos and the organisation of the school.

The strongest feelings which came through from the discussion and written responses were of gratitude for what had been achieved in terms of resources and curriculum planning, and a possible slight feeling of 'we told you so' that no direct inroads appeared to have been made in the area of direct provision for children with learning and behaviour difficulties or in the area of school management. Another feeling that it was possible to detect is resentment on the part of the classteachers that their own skills and practices were not acknowledged within the project.

Some general issues which can be identified from the views of the class teachers at the end of the project and which will contribute towards overall analysis are:

- (i) The protestations on the part of several class teachers that they had not changed over the year and that they were already doing what was suggested by the CAPS team could be seen as a plea for affirmation of their own practice.
- (ii) A mismatch between the amount of time spent by the team on out of class activities and the clearly expressed need for help in class expressed by the teachers can be identified from these evaluations.
- (iii) The teachers appeared to view the CAPS team as experts in the area of library and resource organisation. The team had, however, repeatedly stated before the project began that they did not wish to be perceived as experts.

4.9.4 General conclusion

This chapter has given an account of an intervention project in a primary school. It has looked at the aetiology of the project and the original expectations of the participants; it has

related much of what happened in C School as a result of the learning support teachers' promotion of the Curriculum Access Pilot Scheme. There has been a summary of views about the project and there has been an attempt to draw out some tentative issues which will be included in the wider analysis and discussion in Chapters 6 and 7.

Chapter 5

Change in special needs provision - J County

5.0 Introduction

Six months after data collection with A Learning Resources Service had finished I was approached by the Senior Inspector for Special Educational Needs, KL, in the County of J and asked to work with a group of remedial reading teachers. This work involved supporting these teachers just before the changes to their role were about to take place. KL had been appointed to the county two years previously from a post in higher education and he had succeeded in passing through the County Council a complete reorganisation of special needs provision in primary and secondary schools. This reorganisation involved the newly organised support teams, renamed the Integrated Support Service, offering support to teachers in, mainly primary, schools, instead of children being transported into centres. The Inspector was concerned about the attitude of some remedial teachers towards this change and wished to offer support and guidance before they were interviewed for their new roles; this was to be my brief in one centre which was giving concern, providing information about my own previous role as a support teacher and sharing positive strategies to deal with problems.

As I became familiar with the proposals, and with the worries and fears as well as the positive expectations of the support teachers, many of the issues which had arisen during my research in the borough of A began to surface. Although the situations appeared quite different in that the changes in A emanated from the support teachers themselves, whilst in J the changes came from the senior echelons of the authority, the same kinds of problems of change in practice, collaboration and the skills required to operate successfully in the new role were emerging. The support role was due to change from the beginning of the following calendar year. The support teachers were to begin their changed role in the schools from which children had previously travelled to the centres. There would thus be some familiarity with these schools. During the following autumn term I was able to be released from most of my teaching timetable and the majority of support teachers intended then to begin their new roles in different schools. I therefore proposed to monitor the work of four support teachers during that autumn term. The next section of this chapter gives some more details of the background to the changes and

to the context in which they were taking place. The case study of the change within J support service is represented here by the account of the four support teachers in their changing roles, with some follow up at the end of the academic year. There will be some comment at the end of each section, the main analysis being carried out in Chapter 6.

The evidence for the explanation of the background emanates from local authority published documents as cited, from notes made during and after meetings, and from minutes of meetings. The four case studies are supported by interviews with support teachers, class teachers, headteachers, children, cassette recorded and part-transcribed; fieldnotes made as a participant observer in classrooms, staffrooms, corridors and car parks, catching teachers rushing about their work.

5.1 Background to J County and the changes in special needs provision

The County of J has six divisions, is one of the largest in the country, is prosperous on the whole although there are some towns with run down industries and high unemployment. The local authority had been dominated uninterruptedly by one political party and education throughout the county was regarded as traditional. In the mid-1980s a new Director of Education had appointed several Inspectors with established reputations with the intention of modernising the education service. In 1988 a consultation document was published entitled, 'J Curriculum Statement Children aged 5-16 An education for life', with a plan to print the definitive document in August 1989. This was, of course, before the detailed publication of the National Curriculum and therefore presented a discussion of varied approaches to the organisation of curriculum such as subjects, and areas of experience as taken from the HMI's 'Curriculum Matters' (1985).

The section on special educational needs referred to the 'Policy Consultation Document' which had been issued to all schools a few months earlier and which was the source of change for the Remedial Advisory Centres. Among other concerns the new policy was said to reflect the continuing development of integration opportunities for all pupils with special educational needs, a strong emphasis on in-service education and training as a means of achieving change and the redistribution of resources away from specialist provision and late intervention towards early identification and support of special needs in ordinary schools. The document went on further:

As part of the process of change, the notion of special educational needs will be subsumed in the broader approach of meeting the educational needs of all children. In seeking to develop a whole school policy, the school will promote a corporate sense of responsibility towards the development of the necessary attitudes, patterns of organisation, and curriculum modification through the introduction of approaches to teaching which address each pupil's learning needs.
(J County Council 1988 Section 6.5.2)

This view of special needs was located within an explanation of the 1981 Education Act requiring the authority to develop support to the mainstream of education and develop a continuum of provision which avoids the necessity to differentiate sharply between those with statements and those without. A later section on special educational needs referred to Warnock's definitions of functional integration and goes on to say:

The Authority concurs with this statement and believes that to achieve it, a re-orientation of responsibility is required - from specialist teacher to classroom teacher. All Schools, therefore, within the J Authority are requested to adopt a broader-based curriculum strategy for meeting special educational needs.

Four critical points dominate this strategy: the abolition of low-value labels; the determination to review all aspects of school life which may impinge on appropriate provision; the recognition of the problem as a teaching problem; and the commitment to write clear policy statements.....

Primary schools are encouraged to develop a relationship with the support services which leads to greater integration of pupils with special educational needs into the mainstream curriculum. Schools are advised to develop flexible teaching arrangements which allow for the production and delivery of a limited number of individual programmes, in addition to group and whole class activities. Support teachers are equally encouraged to support class teachers in their efforts, assisting them, through the co-ordinator to modify materials and activities and provide time for individual attention.

(J County Council 1988 Sections 33.1, 33.2, 33.6)

A meeting with KL, the Inspector for Special Educational Needs, elucidated the above document and gave further background to his intentions for change within the authority. He said that one of the aims of the reorganisation was to establish line management and a career structure for the support teachers. Their role would evolve, and the development would be phased over three to four years. He would be looking for assertiveness and the ability for support teachers to create their own roles as the consultancy element of the job would grow. All the remedial teachers would have to reapply for their jobs. In-service would be provided before the official change of role.

A meeting was held between KL, the group of remedial teachers I was to work with as a consultant and myself, where the rationale for moving from individual-child based

intervention to class teacher support was further explored. After giving the expected reasons for change, such as children missing the normal curriculum, the consideration of a curriculum deficit model, the stigma of withdrawal, discussion moved on to consider ‘*what was in it for the class teachers*’? Here KL addressed the ‘*automatic assumption from most teachers that any child with special educational needs is not their responsibility*’, an assumption resulting from a history of special needs ‘*experts*’ closely aligned to the medical profession, ‘*the myths and magic which had grown up around remedial education*’, and the notion of a remedy or cure being possible. He went on to say that the aim should be toward the child succeeding within the classroom and the mainstream curriculum, so:

...when a teacher comes up with a request to look at a child, for whatever reason, develop a system whereby it's a collaborative assessment of the child. Instead of either observing the child or taking the child out, the first move is a discussion with the teacher on the lines of what she or he tried already, what particular areas of the curriculum appear to be too difficult. Note, the emphasis is not on the child, i.e. what does he find difficult, but the other way round.

(Notes of meeting 12.2.88 S Remedial Advisory Centre)

KL finished his talk by advocating the creation of a pro-forma, with questions that would be answered together, that is, by the support teacher and the class teacher, so that the thinking of the class teacher can be gauged. The first suggestion coming from the support teacher should be on the lines of how the child should fit in, not how s/he could be withdrawn.

A leaflet about the rationale and reorganisation of the Integrated Support Teams (part of a package sent out to prospective candidates for Area Co-ordinator posts) explained that several pilot initiatives had seen the emergence of a four-stage model of learning support. Level 1, provision within the school, was where the school/department reviewed methods and materials with a view to accommodating pupils and support was offered from within the school's own resources. Level 2, provision within school with support, involved the integrated support team in an advisory or peripatetic capacity within the school. Level 3, provision outside school by support service, meant withdrawal to a base provided by the support team, for an individually determined period of time. Level 4, provision within school, meant reintegration into a full mainstream setting. The teams were to be reorganised as from two to five units under Area Co-ordinators, (the term Area replacing Division), with team leaders and peripatetic and base teachers making up each unit. The main objective of the reorganised Support Teams would be to offer an

appropriate level of support, mainly to ordinary primary schools, but with the flexibility to offer some support or advice in the secondary sector, and mainly to children experiencing various learning and other associated difficulties.

After my first discussion with the six teachers at the S Remedial Advisory Centre, I summarised their principal feelings and needs as follows:

- *Schools appear to be unaware of the change of role therefore instigation is difficult at the moment because of conflicting expectations.*
- *There was considerable concern about the impossibility of carrying out two roles, that is, support teacher (consultant) and direct remedial teacher on a permanent basis but this will have to happen while schools themselves are undergoing change.*
- *There is a great need for their own INSET and professional development. This would consolidate the idea of the service closing for a few weeks or half a term, a) to have in-service, pay visits, extend own reading, b) to give schools a chance to see the change over.*

(Report to Inspector SEN 11.2.)

Contrary to the expectations of the Inspector the remedial reading teachers, as they were then still called, were very aware of the coming changes and had been anticipating some of the new practices that would be required by going into schools and liaising much more closely with classroom teachers. They were sensitive to the many alterations which would be needed. One teacher, for example, told me during an interview:

Under the old structure there were many children who did not benefit. For every child who came to the centre there were another two or three in that class who needed help.....There's already been a role change from just a static teacher. We're now into selling, salesmanship, the package. I now have to think very carefully about what teachers are saying when they talk to me - a bit like the doctor being told about the bad back, it could mean a lot of things. The biggest change is meeting the teachers on a completely different level, a professional level. It's different, advising, helping them to understand what special educational needs is all about. We have to rethink our professional status as a teacher, no longer a teacher, our main function is to act in a support or advisory capacity, a trouble-shooter, liaison officer.

(Cassette recording: Interview 18.3)

These remedial teachers were also very conscious of the problems which could occur because of the apparent lack of full consultation with mainstream schools as well as with themselves. When asked to what extent schools had been consulted, one interviewee replied:

Very little. Who was going to tell them? It's been done at a higher level but it's not gone in, finished up on the staff room table as another leaflet to read. It needs to be done on a more individual level but that takes longer and is more costly. It is better that each teacher really understands all that is going to happen.

They make so many assumptions. They need to listen carefully, go over it, reinforce.
(Cassette recording: Interview 18.3)

My impression at the end of five half-day sessions was that these teachers understood and accepted the need for change and knew that much of it could be uncomfortable in terms of greater collaboration with colleagues in school. They were keen to further their own knowledge and understanding and looked forward to their own promised in-service course. This manifested itself as one residential weekend in the November, and one five day course at the beginning of the term in which it was proposed that the new role should begin. The in-service was a mixture of team building exercises and current trends in the primary curriculum with half a day on the skills of working with other people in the classroom. All of the teachers at S Remedial Advisory Centre were successful in their applications for the new support posts and two of them agreed that I could shadow them in part of their work during the following academic year. Meanwhile, I contacted a newly appointed Area Co-ordinator in another part of the county and negotiated to shadow two of her teachers as well.

Comment

After working for several years in an authority where we had been discussing changing models of special needs provision for some considerable time it was interesting to observe another education system beginning to go through the same process from different starting points. Because of my own familiarity with the background to the rationale presented by the Inspector for change, it could have been easy to overlook its newness to many class teachers, and to many support teachers. Within the county there had been no widespread, in-depth process of consultation either about changes in special needs provision, or the wider general proposals. Most schools had long-established staffs who had not been subjected to critical inspections (nor yet to much government or media criticism), and therefore had no reason to expect change. The following issues could be highlighted at this stage:

(i) The 'Policy Consultation Document' emphasised in-service education carried out by support teachers as a means of achieving change. The professional development of the support teachers, however, contained minimal references to the skills which they would need to implement the training of classroom teachers. The (much reduced) in-service provision for the support teachers appeared to allocate less than ten per cent of the

time to the consultant and collaborative skills which were seen as of great importance to the new role, as confirmed by the Inspector for Special Educational Needs.

(ii) The notion of the support teacher as a salesperson emerged as a construct from discussions with those about to change role (Interview 18.3 above). In this case, there appeared to be several forms of product: firstly, the change in provision for children with special educational needs had to be promoted; secondly, the consequential change in role of the support service had to be sold; thirdly, the 'package' of suitable curricular and pedagogical approaches was to be sold to the class teachers concerned.

(iii) At this early stage it appeared that support teachers were expected to embrace a managerial role, in that an apparent lack of widespread and in-depth consultation necessitated the dissemination of change by the support service to the schools. This produced more stress for the support teachers, none of whom had a higher status than a B teaching grade, except for the area co-ordinators.

(iv) The Inspector's proposals for the change in special educational needs provisions contained a dichotomy in that while advocating an analysis of children's problems from a 'curriculum-deficit' model of special educational needs, the solution to these problems appeared to one of creating individual programmes, and withdrawal from mainstream classrooms by Stage 3, thereby implying an espousal of a 'child-deficit' model. If, therefore, the support teachers were operating in their advisory capacity to change attitudes towards special needs provision when would they decide to switch from one model to another, and how would they explain this to teachers?

The following sections contain the accounts of the four support teachers whom I shadowed in J County. The same research questions (see p.5) underpinned the case study of changing practice in this local education authority.

5.2 Angela

Background

Angela was recommended to me by her Area Co-ordinator as a support teacher who would be welcoming to a researcher, and whose work would be interesting to observe. Both proved to be the case. I accompanied Angela in her work during the autumn term in the first complete academic year of the change, spending one and a half days a week with her, going into one school twice a week, and another school once. This lasted for half of a term (see below). I then returned to the school the following summer to interview the head and the teachers with whom Angela worked the most.

Angela was an experienced, confident teacher, had worked in the remedial centre for eight years, and did not appear to be too worried about the changes. Her support team had adopted what they termed a rolling programme whereby each teacher worked in two schools each half-term, mornings in one school and afternoons in the other. Not all head teachers were enthusiastic about this approach, especially the ones who had to wait for their turn, and a newsletter outlining the intentions behind this method of support was sent to all heads in the area:

Our aim is to support schools in differentiating the curriculum according to the individual needs of children, the starting point for this enterprise being:

- the school's development plan*
- its schemes of work*
- the learning environment*
- the teaching needs of the children.*

ISS believes that, by building a pre-planning phase into the roll-over model, it has aimed to provide opportunities for fulfilling the statement in Circular No. 5 of the National Curriculum Council that: 'Much planning is needed to enable all pupils with SEN to benefit from the National Curriculum'.

(SNIPS Issue 1 September 1989)

Angela's views on the change in the role of the Support Service

Before observing Angela in her new role I was interested to discover her views on the change and any possible problems which she foresaw. Angela stated her agreement with the philosophy behind the change but felt that the problem was in the implementation. An interview with her, at her Learning Resources Centre, revealed four main focuses for her concerns:

- (i) She felt that there had been no financial investment in the change, and no consultation with or information given to the schools:

...the lack of money and lack of information to schools, and lack of communication. I think that's been the big difficulty. The interaction between the powers that be from whence the change has come, which makes communication between the ISS and the schools difficult, or doesn't provide the support which perhaps we thought we would have liked at the time we would have like it. The back up always seems to be a bit behind, when it was needed.

(Interview transcription: 22.9)

- (ii) She felt that they should have had far more in-service training themselves, particularly in the area of interpersonal skills, although she had an awareness of the 'soft skills' needed by support teachers:

At the moment it relies a great deal on the personality of the ISS teacher. And that's OK if you're good with people. Otherwise it can be disastrous, or if you're a personality that's shy..... [Discussing useful interpersonal skills]...A sense of humour. Above all things a sense of humour. Tact. A liking for people and a sympathy for people. A sympathy for other people's problems and the ability to stick to your guns in the nicest possible way.

(Interview transcription: 22.9)

- (iii) She felt that it was very important to make a judgement as to what the position was with regard to the needs of the school and the class teachers:

They want you to be practical and quite often they haven't got time to care about the philosophy behind it. I think they want help with these children that they know need help, and if perhaps, the help you're able to offer is not what they think would be appropriate, then it's very much your province to convince them to have a go.Starting from where the schools are, I think, is the cardinal rule, and pitching your approach appropriately for those schools, so that if you've got a school that perhaps hasn't seen a lot of change in a very long time you don't go charging in like a bulldozer and upset the apple cart..... And also, the ease with which class teachers let you into the classroom. If it's difficult to get into the classroom, I'll go down as an observer and you know you've got a lot of spade work to do.

(Interview transcription: 22.9)

- (iv) She saw her role as a support for the teacher and a change agent with regard to the curriculum and attitudes towards children with difficulties:

I see my role very much as a support role for the teacher. I think if you get that right, you get the rest right. You've got a situation in which the teacher says, Thank goodness, somebody from the ISS will be in today, I can talk about it. I think if you've got that, then it's good.....I don't always think you have the right to charge in and try and change that but there might be aspects of it which are obviously needed to be changed because outside influences have changed, and you've got to present a way of change, which perhaps doesn't always look like change at the surface.....So if the teacher is focusing on a particular aspect such as a story, and doing some book work with the children, she's not going to feel oh, crikey, I've got to give that group a work sheet. That, to me, is what you're avoiding.....To be able to perceive what you as a teacher need to alter

to allow the children who are not benefiting to benefit.

(Interview transcription: 22.9)

Angela appeared to be highly sensitive to the fears and resistance on the part of class teachers and said that she would like to have seen a lot of preliminary research to discover what the schools felt were their needs, and how they perceived the service.

Observing Angela at work

Angela worked for four mornings a week in Y County Primary School, a one-form entry, split site, primary school, situated in a picturesque village. The school was near to a small council estate and the Headteacher said that several children were affected by unemployment and rural poverty. The Headteacher was popular with staff and parents, and he was very committed to and interested in provision for special educational needs. He was keen to support the new role of the support service and often took over classes so that Angela could have prolonged discussion with teachers. Most of my research with Angela took place in this school. She also worked for three afternoons in another small, village school, five miles away. This was in a very prosperous setting, near to the main line station from where most fathers commuted to work. I accompanied Angela to this school on three occasions.

From the county documentation and from the interview with Angela it appeared that the traditional model of focusing on individual children had been left behind. During my first morning with Angela, however, she spent almost the whole time with individuals or groups of children outside the classroom, either in the library or the music room. She was assessing one child in response to parental concern and her own observations in class. Angela said the 'special needs net had failed' and thought it best to do an informal assessment, although this was deemed difficult without a WISC test, limited, of course, to use by educational psychologists. The other children were being withdrawn from the classroom because Angela felt that she had not yet convinced the teachers of the value of in-class support. As we moved around the school, and during break, Angela said that she was not convinced that it was sensible to stop withdrawing children from their classrooms. She had discussed this at length with her line manager who shared her wariness, and she felt confident about continuing to teach children separately from their peers. The school also had the services of a support ancillary helper who worked for two mornings a week, and a volunteer mother/dinner lady who worked for two whole days a

week. Angela organised this work, which mostly consisted of supervising small groups of children in the library, catching up with class schemes of work in language and maths.

Angela's time in Y School was spent fulfilling a variety of roles. As well as teaching, assessing, and supervising the work of ancillaries, she spent time discussing individual children with their class teachers, deciding how much support would be appropriate. Time was spent counselling parents. I observed one hour-long session where Angela offered a listening ear, and some advice about general family matters as well as advice about the child's education. She appeared to know the mother well and saw it as a normal part of her role. At regular weekly meetings with the infant department's special needs co-ordinator she discussed individual children who were beginning to give concern to class teachers. Telephone liaison took place with the educational psychologist, who asked Angela to do preliminary assessments and gather together family and school data on some children.

In the staff room at mid-morning and lunchtime (Angela always chose to eat her lunch in Y School) she was frequently consulted about appropriate work for certain children. There was one after-school in-service session on books for early reading, where the wish by most teachers to move from the current 'Ginn 360' reading scheme was explored. Angela offered the 'Oxford Reading Tree' as a suggested alternative. In addition Angela acted as a confidante to the head teacher, particularly about less well-established members of staff. Towards the end of the half-term allocated to this school, a lot of time was spent planning for the next few weeks when there would be no support teacher. The focus of all this activity was reading, whether the reading ability of individual children or the school's approach to teaching reading.

During the time I spent with Angela I saw her work in only one classroom, that of the Year 3 (the youngest children on the junior site) teacher, Jenny, a woman in her mid-thirties, the science co-ordinator, who was very friendly with Angela. In this classroom Angela organised the work of the volunteer mother, monitored the work of five children who were seen as on the borderline of being given a special needs 'Level', and spent an hour a week discussing reading strategies for Level 1 and Level 2 children. It was possible here to witness Angela in several aspects of her job, such as consultancy, particularly when assisting Jenny to do a special needs audit as required by the authority; sympathetic listener as summed up by Jenny, *'It's funny, when you've talked something*

through the problem disappears'; change agent, as when Angela's suggestion that a child regarded as being good at nothing should be playing was resisted by Jenny; substitute educational psychologist in her many suggestions of and references to tests. *'We must check that we've done a Hertford Test - there should be a Marie Clay on her'*. Angela frequently made suggestions, often using an almost jocular, self-deprecatory tone. They included strategies for learning spellings based on *'Look, cover, write, check'*, specific changes from Ginn 360 to the Oxford Reading Tree *'where the books were more like real books'*, a term the class teacher did not like; and alternatives to phonics without disagreeing with Jenny's strong adherence to letter sounds. Three times during the half term Angela took a group of five children out into the lobby to read to them and listen to them read.

By half-term Angela had built up apparently close working relationships with all the staff except the deputy head, who tended to keep apart from the rest of the school. She seemed to deal with all kinds of welfare issues and acted as mediator between the school and parents of children with learning difficulties. There were frequent comments made such as *'What will we do when you're not here?'* and *'Why can't you work here all the time?'* Before she left for her next two schools in the rolling programme Angela spent time preparing school, children and parents for her departure, playing a role which in some senses appeared similar to that of a therapist.

At the school where Angela worked in the afternoon the atmosphere was very different and it was felt that there was a long way to go before a start could be made on initiating change. The three afternoons I spent there followed the same pattern. Angela worked for an hour and a quarter in the reception class, where thirty two children sat at desks and began the session by making letters in sand or on small blackboards during the sessions I observed. Angela sat with two particular children judged to have difficulties. Although the children were not allowed to walk round the class, many of them were finding surreptitious ways of playing with the sand. After forty minutes the children were told to write the letters in their exercise books. During break Angela talked about running an in-service programme next half term, even though she would not be coming into the school as a support teacher owing to the rolling programme. The class teacher said she was always there on the night in question but some of the others would be going off. After break Angela took two Year 1 children into the library and continued book making with them. After reading an Oxford Reading Tree book the children did some

word identification exercises and then listened to Angela reading 'Would You Rather...' (by John Burningham).

Reviewing the year

In summer I revisited the school to talk to Jenny, David, from whose class several groups of children were supervised by Angela in the library, and the head teacher. I also interviewed Angela herself. Jenny had seen Angela as very supportive:

I also use Angela an awful lot to give me advice that I actually find her just as useful in aiming me in the right direction...and using her as a sounding board for my ideas, just as much as actually coming into the classroom and actually working with the children.

(Cassette transcription interview 24.7.90)

Jenny felt that children with the sort of mild learning difficulties present in her classroom could cope in mainstream schools but children with major behavioural and emotional difficulties should be in a unit with specialist teachers. Jenny was aware of the kinds of skills required for successful support work:

I think somebody who has got training and preferably experience - but you can't always expect experience in working with children with special needs is really essential. Because, as I say, I do rely a lot on the ISS for advice, as much as anything, an input to me as much as to the children. Unless you've got somebody with training and back up, you know from the right sort of people, then I don't think it would work. I don't think you could just put any teacher straight from the classroom into the ISS and get them to do the sort of job that Angela does because I just don't think it would work. It would be like the blind leading the blind.....I think there would be personalities that work and personalities that don't..... Somebody who can listen, and adapt the situation. It wouldn't be any good for somebody to go and say this is what you must do into any situation because then that is going to get people's backs up and it won't work. Obviously, the person who is doing it has got to be tactful, and accepting that a wide range of teaching styles are perfectly OK. They've got to be able to go into a lot of different classrooms and say, yes this is fine, er...and build on that. Not go in and say I don't like the way you teach, you've got to change it - it just won't work.

(Cassette transcription interview: 24.7.)

David, a teacher new to this school but someone who had known Angela in her support role at a previous school, had a clear view as to her role over the last year:

One role certainly is to support children who have special difficulties. The other one is to help the teacher too. To work out programmes. I mean, I certainly, am leaning on her to help me with children on Level 1 to produce a programme of work which is differentiated enough for them. It's twofold.

(Cassette transcription interview: 24.7)

David also felt that children with moderate problems should remain in mainstream classes with support but that there are certain children who can't cope and should go elsewhere. He did feel that he may be working differently through a spin off of ideas from the support teacher. When asked what sort of skills were needed by a support teacher, he replied:

Well, I think Angela's got most of them. The ability to actually get teachers' confidence first of all, because she's got to work with the teachers. Er..that comes from openness, friendliness, not appearing to be threatening, all those things, which are not easy to do. So you've got to be able to build good relationships with the children, and the parents as well. So a lot of it's personality, I think But on top of that, they need the technical background in special needs
(Cassette transcription interview: 24.7)

The Headteacher spoke to me while he was minding a class for a teacher out on a course. He spoke very highly of the support which Angela had given to the school for two half-terms during the year. He was aware of the changes needed in most of the classes to incorporate differentiation and an inclusion of children with special educational needs. He praised his teachers while acknowledging that some of them might be resistant to changes in practice. He appeared happy with the progress that Angela had made over the year but felt that regular visits throughout the year would be preferable to the rolling programme, as during the time when noone came in, the focus on special needs decreased.

I also spoke to eight children, four from Jenny's class and four from David's. All these children received help from the non-teaching assistant and the volunteer mother. They described the sort of the work they did as extra writing practice and spelling. When asked whether there was any difference between the kind of work they did with Angela and the other two women, the children said that Angela read to them, whereas they read to the other two. The children did not appreciate any difference in status or power.

My interview with Angela at the end of the year showed a positive view of her work in this school over the year. She described the change that had occurred in the following way:

*The most important thing was the lessening of stress in the class teachers towards children with special educational needs. They no longer perceive every child as needing a specialist, certainly at this school. They say what shall we do, ask what **they** can do rather than **you**. Which I think is a huge shift and a great compliment to the staff.*

(Cassette transcript interview 25.7)

When asked how she thought those changes had been brought about, Angela replied:

Interpersonal skills. Fifty per cent of this job relies on relationships with the staff as individuals and on their perception of your function, and it's easiest to operate if they see you as a listening ear, someone they can let off steam to, as much as anything else. They're quite likely to ring you in the evenings and say I just had to talk. All of them have my home number, and the parents. It's very important that we should be reachable, I think. I know some teachers find that difficult but we've got to be available, not just during schooltime.

(Cassette transcript interview: 25.7)

Angela continued by praising the staff of this school and saying that not everywhere had been so easy. She felt that she had changed some of the resources that she did not approve of, such as Ginn 360, and had gently persuaded reluctant staff to try other methods. Overall Angela was very optimistic about the future and looked forward to the next year when the support teachers were going to work in schools in teams of four for two weeks at a time. She thought the support teachers were successful in her area because they had chosen this career rather than having been moved into the service like many others.

Comment

At first glance, it looked as if there were few major differences between Angela's new role and her old job as a remedial reading teacher. The obvious change was the location within the school instead of the centre. After speaking to the teachers and the head, all of whom had the highest personal and professional regard for Angela, I was left with the puzzle of how a support teacher whose own pedagogical beliefs did not differ noticeably from those of the school, and who enjoyed such close relationships within the school, could effect the proposed move towards increased differentiation and integration, as specified in the authority's policy document. Angela spoke of enabling the teachers to become more empowered to look for solutions to learning difficulties in the classroom. However, it appeared at the end of the year that the teachers, the head, and the parents, all seemed very dependent on Angela as an individual even though Angela felt that the teachers were beginning to see their responsibilities as far as provision for special needs was concerned.

Some of the issues which have emerged from this case study and will contribute to later analysis are:

- (i) The team in which Angela was based had decided to adopt a rolling programme of support, thus leaving many schools without any external provision for special educational needs for up to a term. This decision was made without consulting heads or class teachers and could be perceived as ignoring the wishes of the client group.
- (ii) Angela's role appeared to be very much that of 'friendly expert', a role she seemed to relish and consolidate. Before Angela was due to go to another school for half a term as part of the rolling programme, she appeared to be offering the teachers consolation for her departure rather than empowering the classteachers themselves to take on the provision for children with special educational needs.
- (iii) Time for discussion between Angela and the class teachers was provided by the headteacher and, therefore, she did not have to impose on their free time during breaks or after school. Angela also chose to spend her lunchtimes in this school and she used this time for her own relaxation in the staffroom, thus sharing the leisure culture of the teachers and consolidating positive relationships.
- (iv) Angela frequently stipulated that the change in the support teaching role must be carried out slowly so that class teachers had time to adapt. In fact, by the end of the year Angela had only worked in one classroom, and that was the room of a teacher with whom she had developed a good close relationship. This was also a teacher who appeared to be keen, confident, open to new ideas, and attended many courses. Angela justified continuing to withdraw children from the other classes by prejudging the reactions of the teachers as hostile to her working in their rooms.

5.3 Deirdre

Background

Deirdre was a member of the team with which I had worked in a consultative capacity during the previous year. She had agreed to my shadowing her over the first term of working with her newly allocated schools. I then returned to the school in which she spent the majority of her time in the following summer term, when I interviewed the Headteacher, two class teachers and three children. I observed Deirdre working for two half-days a week in a large middle school in a prosperous village on the edge of a large conurbation. She also worked for five half-days in five separate first or primary schools. Deirdre had lived and worked in the area for twelve years and was the leader of a new support team of four teachers, one ancillary teacher and a part-time secretary, so she knew many of the teachers and children well, personally and professionally.

Despite an established reputation in many of the area schools as an effective support teacher, gained while enlarging the previous remedial reading role before official local authority initiatives, Deirdre had to withstand hostility and wariness towards her new role from the head and teachers of this school. During the previous two terms (the first since the change of role at the beginning of the calendar year) another support teacher in this school had encountered much resistance to the changes in supporting children with special educational needs, and had not been sufficiently skilled to deal with what became a fairly unpleasant situation. Deirdre had decided that as team leader she should deal with this.

Deirdre's views on the change in the role of the Support Service

Before Deirdre began her new role in different schools I interviewed her about her views on the change and the constraints and possibilities to come. Personally she felt comfortable with the change as she had had some preparatory in-service, as well as the in-service supplied by the county. As a leader of a team Deirdre felt that not all the staff had been adequately trained or were adequately equipped with the right skills:

I don't think some of our staff were prepared enough for the forthcoming role. I think they've had to use up the teachers who were already in the reading centres and the tutorial centres.

(Interview transcription 8.9)

Deirdre appeared to be very aware of the amount of sensitivity required when working in a classroom with another teacher. for instance:

We must find out from the class teacher how we can best help, where our

efforts are going to be put into, remembering that it's the teacher's class and not ours. It's very important, something some of the teams are going to find that it's difficult. We've got to go and be the second teacher in the classroom - but hold your tongue at times when you really want to say something. Also to be very professional about what you do say as well. There's a problem of not saying things that you've seen, what's gone on, a very difficult role actually.

(Interview transcription 8.9)

Following on from this point, Deirdre felt that it was very important for decisions to have already been made regarding classroom procedures such as expectations of behaviour, distribution of resources and similar.

But a lot of careful preparation is necessary - both sort of on a personal term, the classroom management, and also the work side of it. There's got to be a lot of work between you before you go into the classroom.

(Interview transcription 8.9)

Deirdre considered that there had been inadequate consultation with schools and teachers. The Area Co-ordinator had arranged a meeting with the Headteachers within the Division, but this was not the same as consulting, or even informing, individual classroom teachers. She felt that support teachers in other centres were not very well informed about the changes, and that some of them were '*burying their heads in the sand*' about the changes.

Deirdre appeared to be aware of the many practical issues which she might have to address in the classroom if she was going to have any impact on teachers' practice with regard to children with special educational needs:

There are quite a lot of changes, only it's got to be done tactfully. Where you see things happen, e.g. small writing on the blackboard, silly little things that teachers don't think about. We're trying to convince them that what they are putting in front of them is way beyond their ability. They can still cope but it needs to be modified.

(Interview transcription 8.9)

Deirdre went on to say that not only would curriculum materials have to be modified, but that teachers' attitudes towards children with problems would have to be changed.

They have to try to encourage, spend more time, explain more clearly, use apparatus, explain the point. Not to go back when the child has not understood and say 'Oh, I've shown you that, not again.' Children need to ask several times. Teachers can take them on one side with other children - it's quite difficult.

(Interview transcription 8.9)

Deirdre appeared to be very aware of the sort of problems she might have to face in the classroom both in terms of teacher resistance to the fundamental concept of in-class

support teaching, as well as the, mainly in her view, pedagogical changes which were needed. She was fully prepared to approach her new task carefully, anxious to avoid any possible feelings of being threatened on the part of class teachers.

Observing Deirdre at work

As stated above, Deirdre replaced a support teacher who had not experienced a great deal of success according to the perceptions of the head and teachers of Y school. Although Deirdre knew some of the teachers outside the school, it was the first time that she had worked with any of them. An initial problem in organising the support work was caused by the structure of the school day, which ran on secondary lines, split into twenty-minute sessions, most, but not all of them, doubled up. The lessons followed traditional secondary subject areas throughout the school, and were being changed to fit incoming National Curriculum requirements. The site was large, the classrooms small and crowded and the teachers were completely unused to having another adult in the classroom. My main observations of Deirdre started early in the term when it was still assumed by the class teachers that children would be withdrawn and continued throughout that term. I then returned to the school for two of Deirdre's sessions in school in the following summer term. I accompanied Deirdre from classroom to classroom, making field notes; I also sat with Deirdre in the staffroom before school, during mid-morning break and for part of the lunch break. Her work centred round the ten classes of nine to eleven year olds, equivalent to the primary phase.

Although Deirdre had explained her intention of working in the classroom to the whole school staff, during the first two or three weeks she was frequently met at the classroom door with a question about who she wanted to take out for that lesson. This request was resisted with a short explanation for in-class support in terms of providing the children concerned with access to the curriculum. During a typical morning Deirdre generally worked with four, and occasionally five, different teachers, moving from classroom to classroom. At this stage the children were the focus and the reason for moving around. She often had to focus on pupils who had been statemented as dyslexic, or as having specific learning difficulties as a result of parental pressure. In her opinion there were children with far greater needs who received less help.

In these classes teaching approaches varied enormously. In one classroom, with Mr. P, a geography teacher who was known to be struggling with establishing and maintaining discipline, Deirdre found herself being an extra body during a twenty five minute lecture. She had been unable to find out what the lesson was going to be. For the following fifteen minutes, although having a planned focus on two children, Deirdre spent most of her time distracting many children from creating trouble for the teacher and trying to return them to their workbooks. This was a pattern in the four sessions observed with Mr. P. During conversation afterwards Deirdre expressed her dissatisfaction with this situation but felt that this was the kind of teacher she should be working with to bring about change and therefore she was reluctant to give up.

In another class, with Mrs. M, Deirdre appeared to establish a working rapport very quickly. The support teacher and the class teacher were observed discussing their work at ease before the beginning of the lesson and sometimes during the lesson. All the children were sent from one teacher to the other for praise and affirmation of good work. Mrs. M (Head of English) was a skilful, experienced teacher who enjoyed the high opinion of Deirdre. The resources being used in this Year 5 class, however, were regarded as too difficult for Christopher and Ryan, the foci for special needs support. Deirdre suggested ways of making the text more accessible, such as photo-enlarging and highlighting certain key words. During one session (10.11) Mrs. M expressed her pleasure that she had been able, based on Deirdre's suggestion, to present an alternative way of working for Ryan in the form of paper divided into six for pictorial recording of a story. This enabled him to work with the rest of the class. In this class Deirdre was seen to challenge Mrs. M regarding a spelling test which was given to the children on a formal basis. It was quickly explained that this test had come from the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, a young man with whom Deirdre liaised regarding her timetable, but with whom she did not teach. After three weeks, during which Deirdre had worked with Mrs. M for six forty minute sessions, their relationship appeared to be sufficiently relaxed for Deirdre to offer frequent suggestions regarding the format of the lesson materials and the work set for Ryan, Christopher and several other children who appeared to be having difficulties. Several times during conversations immediately after these sessions, Deirdre commented that Mrs. M did not really need support as she already differentiated the curriculum and gave the children with special educational needs a lot of attention and help.

Other teachers with whom Deirdre was observed supporting came in between Mr. P and Mrs. M in terms of ease of relationship and receptiveness to Deirdre's presence and suggestions. For instance, at the beginning of the second session Deirdre spent with Mrs. W, an English teacher taking a Year 5 class, this dialogue was heard:

Mrs. W: I'd like you to help out with Darren and Eileen. I gave them a test last week and their sounds are so poor, they can't spell. I gave them a page of blends and I was going to ask them to make a flashcard for their partner. You need to go carefully through these.

Deirdre: Was it that test that Gavin (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) gave?

Mrs. W: Yes. It threw up a whole can of worms.

Deirdre: I can bring in some extra work to help here.

(Field notes: 11.10)

In this lesson Deirdre appeared to have had no contribution to the planning, and, indeed, was asked to do something which endorsed a spelling test which she thought was pointless.

She did, however, begin to open a crack by suggesting her own materials and maintained that getting the classteacher to take on these support teacher's materials would be a move towards more noticeable change. In other classes, when asked to assist the children with work which Deirdre thought was unhelpful and unstimulating, such as the many English workbooks in use, she advocated a 'Softly, Softly' approach, finding out what the position was before suggesting change.

Deirdre made the greatest professional break through the resistance during informal chats in the staffroom. She brought the subject of social conversations round to the curriculum and the practical approaches that teachers could adopt to encourage maximum participation for all children. Listening to a history teacher express despair at the inability of certain children to read some textbooks, Deirdre suggested one or two ways of modifying and adapting the text and went on to indicate that she would be willing to run an in-service session where she would show them many more ways of working on textbooks. This suggestions was taken up, and within four weeks after the autumn half-term Deirdre had run two after-school workshops in the school. The first session was attended by fourteen teachers, with twenty-two attending the second. This increase reflected the very favourable response. The sessions were frequently referred to in the staffroom and Deirdre was given positive feedback regarding how successfully her ideas were working out in class.

Discussing her approach to these sessions, Deirdre said she had decided to approach them in an entirely practical way. She felt that these teachers were not ready to listen to a theoretical exposition on curriculum change. Some success in getting them to think about materials and trying out modifications in the classroom would convince teachers of her practical credentials, as well as indirectly supporting more children than is possible in the time allocated to the school. Deirdre had attended a diploma course during the previous three years and had done a dissertation on differentiation of the curriculum. In this school she presented the concept of differentiation in terms of presenting and manipulating texts in simplified ways. The suggestions she made included photo-enlarged text, use of taped text, word searches and highlighting text, among many other methods. When she was able to discuss plans for lessons, not easy when working with five teachers in a morning, Deirdre would usually obtain the textbooks and work on them beforehand, thereby providing a model for the class teacher as well as supporting the children.

By the end of the term there was a clear improvement in relationship between Deirdre and the school staff. The Headteacher was seen to congratulate Deirdre in the staffroom on the success of her in-service sessions. First names were now being used in contrast to the formality of early in the term. A teacher who had said in September that she was 'dreading' Deirdre coming into her classroom was seen negotiating in a very friendly manner for a bale of straw from Deirdre's husband's smallholding. The children who were interviewed at this stage, Ryan and Debbie, both Year 5, expressed their appreciation of the strategies for work which Deirdre gave them, such as where to write, where to miss a line, how to read things more easily. They also said that they were still finding it hard to get used to the school and that lessons were much harder than in the first school.

Reviewing the year

The following summer, after Deirdre had worked for one year in the school, it was clear from talking to the Headteacher and some of the class teachers that attitudes towards the new support role had changed considerably. During an interview in the last week of July the Head said that he had just written a letter to Area Office in praise of Deirdre's work in the school. Having complained bitterly about the previous support teacher he now felt that he had to thank county management for sending such a good one this year. The staff had grumbled that the previous support teacher got a 'B' allowance for sitting

listening to children read for twenty minutes, a job any parent could do. He went on to relate how Deirdre had come in and turned that situation round to such an extent that during a recent school in-service day, when given a choice, most of the staff had opted for Deirdre's session on differentiation. When asked how was she different from the other teacher, the reply was:

Deirdre is a lot more positive. She produces work on the topic at a low level, she finds out what the teachers are doing. She produces different work, and she gives good advice, or so I'm told it's good advice from the staff. So that's what I think the difference is: she knows what she's talking about; she helps people who go to her; she actually produces the material.

(Interview transcript 13.7)

The Head said that he had changed his mind about the value of the Support Service and would not prefer a member of his own staff doing the role. He did feel that the number of schools covered should be limited, preferably to no more than three. Under new financial arrangements he would not mind paying for someone of the right calibre.

Observing Deirdre working with Mrs. M and Mrs. W at the end of the year there appeared to be a marked change in the degree of relaxed interchange between the two people in the classroom, especially with Mrs. W where the relationship had seemed rather stiff. Deirdre appeared to be doing the same kinds of activities as in the autumn term, namely, helping a focused group of children to interpret the classroom activities and to keep up with their peers in terms of output. This took the form of re-reading comprehension texts and highlighting key phrases for the answers, talking through set questions and editing the children's writing. Deirdre frequently assisted other children in the class, who came to her freely for help.

Interviews with these two teachers revealed a similarity in perceptions of what Deirdre's role was:

Mrs. M: Helping children with problems, very much so. What is lovely is that she has built up a relationship with them over the year. She knows exactly who they are. The added advantage is that the other children get a bit of help too. It helps no end to have an extra pair of hands. Obviously the very poorest don't need her the whole time.

Mrs. W: I see her as an extension of myself and helping the children sort out their work.....I feel as though she's there for the children and not for me.

(Interview transcripts 13.7)

They felt very happy to have Deirdre in the classroom as she was perceived to have an easy-going personality and could fit in with whatever the teacher was doing. When asked about change in the classroom both Mrs. M and Mrs. W associated this concept with

change in the children's achievements, of which there was a substantial amount to be identified.

The children, Ryan and Debbie, were able to identify help which they had received from Deirdre over the year. They knew that she came into their class in Health Education and English. She was seen as someone who explained all the things they could not do. Both children said that teachers read out work too quickly so they needed help with the words. Debbie also found maths very difficult and there was no one to help her there.

During Deirdre's year in Y school it was clear that a considerable change in teachers' attitudes towards the support teacher had been achieved. She was now a highly regarded, welcome visitor, whose opinion was sought and respected. A practical start had been made on changing some aspects of the curriculum. However, Deirdre was the first to recognise that there was a long way to go in moving the teachers from seeing all the difficulties residing in the children towards an acceptance of the unsuitability of many parts of their curriculum and pedagogy. She reiterated her approach as:

Softly, softly. Sometimes it's really trying to infiltrate. Not pushing yourself in, I feel, 'cos you don't want to get people's backs up and once you've got somebody's back up they switch off.

(Interview transcript 13.7)

She recognised that her approach might not fit in with education authority requirements which had given the Support Service only three years to make an impact on the county's primary schools. In her interview at the end of the year Deirdre did not refer to the model of special educational needs put forward by the Inspector, that of 'the recognition of the problem as a teaching problem', nor to the request by the authority that all schools 'are to adopt a broader-based curriculum strategy for meeting special educational needs.' (See section 5.1) When asked how she would approach this school if she had an ideal context, Deirdre said:

I still would go in and see how things were, the lie of the land. I wouldn't go in saying look, here I am. I would still go in with a fairly low profile, and not have too much to say in the first instance, and perhaps hope there was someone I know who I could chat to and gradually...I think, very much, that I would do that again, rather than rush in.

(Interview transcript 13.7)

Comment

By the end of the year it appeared that Deirdre had made a successful and positive personal impact on the school, changing the attitude of most of the staff to one of acceptance of support teaching within the classroom. In the classrooms she had introduced changes to resources and curriculum materials in the form of making them more accessible to children with learning difficulties; in the opinion of the class teachers, she had contributed towards the development of increased self confidence in many of these children; she had made the task of classroom teaching easier during the time she was there. From observations and interviewing the Head, some teachers, and Deirdre herself, she had not addressed the 'child deficit' and 'curriculum deficit' models of special educational needs explicitly, nor had she conveyed in any way the idea that she was there to change the school's approach to curriculum and pedagogy on a broader basis, according to local authority mandate. Specific issues which arise from this case are:

- (i) The perceived lack of consultation with schools as to the change in role of support teachers meant that Deirdre found it necessary to invest a considerable amount of her time and energy in persuading this school that her presence was necessary and desirable. As a consequence, her interactions with class teachers could be seen as being conciliatory rather than challenging.
- (ii) A low-key, purely practical approach to both classroom change and in-service contributions was considered by Deirdre as being potentially more effective in providing access to the curriculum for all children. On the other hand, this approach could lead teachers to assume that ensuring provision for children with special educational needs was really a series of teaching and technical tricks, whereas an understanding of some of the theoretical reasons for modifying their resources and curriculum materials could enable them to generate their own ideas on changing some aspects of their work.
- (iii) Deirdre seemed to be aware of the desirability of collaborative planning and the establishment of jointly agreed procedures in the classroom when two teachers were working together. However, during my observations in the first term there was little evidence of joint planning, apart from snatched discussion between the early morning staff briefing and leaving the staffroom for the classrooms. This could be seen as resulting in a 'classroom helper' role for Deirdre when working with some teachers, a concept which was confirmed through interview with these teachers both at the beginning and the end of the year.

(iv) Following on from (iii) above, the classroom teachers seemed to be unaware of any actual or needed change in themselves as a function of Deirdre's presence in the classroom or the school. Deirdre was seen to be there for the children. (The children interviewed were aware of Deirdre's function with regard to themselves and saw her as a real source of support.)

(v) While Deirdre strongly believed in a slow approach towards changing teacher's attitudes regarding provision for children with special educational needs, she was aware of pressure from the education authority on the support service and the time limit imposed. Despite this pressure she still believed that spending this first year establishing her credibility and beginning at the level of the teacher was worthwhile. One could ask whether her approach was too slow considering the low level of awareness of the need for change on the part of the class teachers.

(vi) Through this account of Deirdre's work it is possible to identify some areas where the preparation of the support teachers for their new role was inadequate. The weakness of the support teacher whom Deirdre replaced raises questions as to the adequacy of recruitment procedures. Deirdre herself, although very personable, sensitive and aware of teachers' needs, could perhaps have been trained to spend more time explaining her new role in an assertive way. Deirdre appeared to be unaware of the nature of change and the different levels of change through which teachers needed to progress in order to take on board the county policy on integration of children with special educational needs.

5.4 Sue

Background

Sue had worked for nine years as a Remedial Reading Teacher and had begun to do some work in schools, away from the centre, before the changeover of role. During a meeting with her team to explain my research the previous term Sue had expressed an interest in participating. When I started to observe Sue it was towards the end of her first term in a very small, edge of town, school with two full-time teachers, one part-time teacher and a teaching Head. During the week she also worked for two half-days each in three small primary schools, and one half-day each in two infant schools. In X County Primary School, where the research took place, a new Head-teacher had started in the autumn term, having competed for the post with a long-serving member of staff. The head taught Years 5 and 6, vertically grouped, and was replaced for three half-days administrative duties by the part-time teacher who had worked in this capacity for ten years. All the teachers apart from the head had been there for between ten and eighteen years. They had a very strong belief in the effectiveness of their own previous teaching and now felt affronted by the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act and the imposition of a new, young head teacher from a different authority. They were also being told that children with learning difficulties were no longer to be removed from their classrooms, and that another teacher was to work in there with them occasionally, suggesting changes in their practice. Conversation at mid-morning break centred around resentment of these changes with overt antagonism towards Sue being expressed.

Sue's views on the change in the role of the Support Service

During an interview before being observed at work, Sue expressed some forthright views over the way the new Support Service had been established. She admitted that her views were influenced by her strong union involvement. Whereas she was generally in favour of the principles behind the changes:

I don't feel, like, you know, just someone crawling in the back door, and this term particularly I've been able to go in with much more assurance because I know there's backing, and I've said, you know, this is what we're going to do, rather than please can I come and do this;

(Interview transcript 22.9)

she also felt there were certain disadvantages:

I just hope it's going to get a little easier, because this, this last week it's been absolutely awful, because I've been making appointments, and seeing people in

lunch hours and after school, and you know, as a union person I'm against all this and I'm doing it.

(Interview transcript 22.9)

She felt that the level of consultation across the education authority had been minimal, with only one consultative meeting being offered. She had been to other meetings in her union capacity but felt she would not have known what was going on otherwise. Sue also expressed views about the mismatch of advice being offered to class teachers between some inspectors and herself. She was aware of her own lack of status but felt that her advice was more valid because:

Sue *We are just ordinary teachers. That's good in one sense, because they can accept us and know that we have been in classrooms and we know what the practical job is like, but you know, it's really hard to get it right sometimes. Because in some schools, where I've been to an in-service training session to do a talk about whole school policy, they've started off by saying well, you're the expert, you know, and there's me trying to tell them I'm not.*

LH *Yes*

Sue *In other ways, I want them to think I am, because I do have expertise.*

(Interview transcript 22.9)

Sue felt that she enjoyed the advisory part of the role the most, wanted to do more collaborative work but had been doing more direct teaching of individual children than she really wanted to do. There were problems of timing as she did not want to do all her work after school. When asked how she felt the teachers saw her role she replied:

I've been in every school and given them a kind of mini lecture on these new four levels of intervention. I don't know how much of it they've grasped, and, you know, mostly they have accepted it. And I think possibly because I have been firm about it - this is what we are supposed to do, and so I've sort of said it hasn't come from me, it's come from up there and so, because it's come from up there, oh well, we've got to do it.

(Interview transcript 22.9)

She did feel that schools still had a long way to go in changing their approach to children with special educational needs, as even when they said they agreed and understood,

.....when it comes down to it they still up and say well, what can I do about Jamie, you know.. and they still think really you're there just to sort out this child.

(Interview transcript 22.9)

In Sue's opinion there had been adequate training for team building skills at the centre and area level for the support teachers but there could have been more work on assertiveness and dealing with Headteachers in particular. Again she felt advantaged

because of her own political training outside her work. In terms of overall desirable qualities within support teaching Sue felt:

Obviously, you've got to have people with something extra. There's no, it's not just a good classroom teacher, it's teachers who can work with other teachers. I think that's what I enjoy about this job, is working with adults, more than working with children, and I really like that.....It's quite obvious you'd invite people who were interested but you'd have to be quite clever at spotting who was good at relating to adults as well as children 'cos they're two different things.

(Interview transcript 22.9)

Observing Sue at work

In X School Sue believed that a considerable amount of change needed to take place to ensure access to the curriculum for all children. There was a very traditional, whole-class approach towards subjects, despite vertical grouping which sometimes led to three age groups in one class. The blackboard was extensively used and children did all their work in exercise books. Most maths and language work was done from cards, sheets or the board, with little use of practical apparatus.

After eight weeks of working in the school, Sue still had to justify working in the classroom to each teacher and was only just beginning to spend time with the whole class. During breaktime conversations the subject of in-class or withdrawal teaching frequently arose. Mrs. S, who taught years 2, 3 and 4, felt that no-one asked what the classteachers wanted, which was someone to come in and take the children with severe difficulties. Mrs. J, who taught Reception, years 1 and 2, agreed and felt that it was all wrong at the moment. The Headteacher joined in with general agreement. Five minutes later, when Sue went to Mrs. S's classroom, she was greeted with the words:

What do you want to do with your group then, would you like to take them out?

[The Support Teacher then referred to a conversation with the Headteacher when she had explained the change in approach.]

So, in fact, you're in the classroom but not concentrating on the ones in difficulty?

(Field notes 7.11)

At the end of that session Mrs. S commented that Sue was too soft with the children and they should not have been allowed to pull on her cardigan as they had been doing. Mrs. S appeared to be monitoring Sue's interactions with the children and commented that Matthew, Daniel, Laura and Philip were missing out on special needs attention because of the attention Sue gave to other children.

The following week Mrs. S decided to work with the 'poorest' nine children while Sue worked with the other 15. The class teacher was writing a poem on paper for all the group sitting round her at the table, finishing off from before mid-morning break. The following took place:

Mrs.S *Philip, I'll give you two minutes to find something to say about the fog. Everyone in the class has said something. If you don't, you'll have to write at breaktime. [As the children suggest words, such as 'I come outside', Mrs. S substitutes her own words, for example, 'I step outside'.]*

Mrs. S *.....I'm looking for it better put than that, a nicer way of saying it. [Long pause]*

Well, if you're frightened, shall we say, fear creeps up on me?

[Mrs. S makes several sarcastic comments about the children's attempts at language, then reads out a poem which is almost entirely her own words.]

[To Philip] It's a pity you're going to have to stay in at dinner time, have you thought of anything yet? Go away and look at the board, see if you can think of anything.

(Field notes 14.11)

This poetry writing session finished at 11.15 a.m. as the class were going to begin their maths. Mrs. S spoke to Sue while the children were clearing up, saying that these children were not really up to writing poetry. She felt that the whole class were 'impoverished' with regard to language and she did not know how Pie Corbett (a published local editor of children's poetry) got poetry out of children. Sue indicated neither agreement or disagreement with the class teacher. Later that morning, when being interviewed, Philip and Matthew said that they found writing stories (which they thought they had been doing about fog) was the hardest as they could not think of the words. When Miss E (Sue) worked with them she *'tells us the words'*.

After the poetry session Sue worked with the group of four children in the class who were identified as Level 2 children according to the local authority special educational needs audit and therefore justified intervention by outside support services. Although ostensibly working in the classroom, Sue was using the shop set up just outside the classroom for practical mathematics work. The classrooms had very wide, folding doors which were kept permanently open but there was an appearance of the children being withdrawn from the main lesson. Before the end of the session Mrs. S had asked Sue to leave work for the children with special educational needs to do while Mrs. Jones, a parent, and Mrs. Craig, a Special Needs Assistant, were in the classroom. Sue produced some phonic exercises which would reinforce what the children had been doing in class, filling in medial vowels, completing words, and matching words to pictures.

A different pattern was observed when Sue was working with Mrs. J's class. Here Sue was asked to take a group of children while the rest of the class attended the school assembly. Sue's protestations that she and the children should be partaking in assembly in order not to be seen as separate were countered by the view that her time in school was very limited and should all be spent with the children. As these were the youngest children, and as, in Sue's opinion, Mrs. J taught in a more child-centred way than Mrs. S, the support work in the class was limited to these short sessions during assembly.

During this latter part of the autumn term the support teachers had to carry out an audit of children with special educational needs, the results of which would contribute towards LMS funding decisions. This audit involved discussion between Sue and the class teachers, deciding where each child under consideration fell in the authority stages of intervention. Forms had to be filled in: this appeared to be unproblematic until the section entitled 'strategies implemented' came up. It was here that the class teachers' views, described by Sue as 'entrenched', were made explicit. Mrs. S was clear in her comments to Sue on what she saw as an unhelpful role:

This morning - the children who don't need help going with the support teacher - you know what infants are like. It would be better for me if you have the group in the corner, or outside, then it's clear to the others that that group is the special needs group for the teacher.

(Field notes 20.11)

In reply to Sue's comments about stigmatisation, Mrs. S said that the limited amount of time should be pinned down to the children who needed extra help. Such views from Mrs. S and Mrs. J seemed to be underpinned by a belief that all the problems resided within the children, and by an apparent unwavering belief in the effectiveness of their own teaching. Discussion with Sue revealed that she felt she could not attack their views directly as that would be counterproductive in many ways. First, a straight-forward approach would increase the hostility already felt by the school towards the support service. Second, these two teachers were fairly intimidating women and despite her belief in an assertive approach Sue did not wish to stir up antagonism. Third, away from his staff, the head had shown signs of sympathising with the possibilities of the new approach and any kind of confrontation would lead him to defend his own staff and the loss of a potential ally.

An interview with the Headteacher indicated that he had a full understanding of the new role of the support service and had worked with support teachers in a very positive way in his previous authority. He felt that in this authority, the support service:

...had to get down to grass roots. They need to get in and they need to find out exactly what teachers need and what they require....They need to talk to teachers about what they're doing and what are their problems, then gear it up. Rather than invent marvellous schemes, lots of bits of paper with diagrams going every where, and expecting me to try and tell them to get on with it.

(Interview transcript 20.11)

He would have liked one person attached to his school full time, although he admitted that he knew this was an unrealistic expectation. He wanted someone:

...who is prepared to take responsibility and to take on a leading role, and to develop the programme and work consistently with the teachers. The trouble is with the system now with Sue coming in, is that she's here two mornings a week. She teaches two mornings a week and shoots off at five past twelve. It's not Sue's fault as she has to get to the next school for the p.m. session. As a result there's no conversation, no talk goes on between the teachers and her. It's always in a limbo. So there's no continuity and no progression. ISS [Integrated Support Service] don't seem to understand. They will have to do it in their spare time. More supply cover's needed, it costs money.

(Interview transcript 20.11)

The Head fully appreciated the difficulties of trying to change the ways of working in a class which might be putting children with special educational needs at a disadvantage:

..because if an Englishman's home is his castle, a teacher's classroom is the same thing. What would have to happen would be is that first of all they would have to go in there and work the system as it is, and then they would have to change it bit by bit by suggestion....You adjust it bit by bit by bit. Admittedly, that sometimes means that certain children will not be having a fair crack of the whip. There's no way you're going to turn round and say it's a load of rubbish....The other way would be to rip them to pieces and say this is appalling, you've got to sort it out, in which case you might well succeed, but on the other hand you wouldn't, 'cos I know teachers who would just turn round and put two fingers up to you and say I'm not interested. And it's very difficult, they can pay lip service, it doesn't actually happen in the classroom.

(Interview transcript 20.11)

After the tape recorder had been switched off the Headteacher said that he felt the situation was not working in his school and he questioned whether the Integrated Support Service had the level of expertise required. The support teacher needed to be in the school longer and should not rush away at twelve o'clock. In discussion, Sue said that she left at twelve o'clock because she felt uncomfortable in the staff room, and because she felt that she was entitled to a lunch time. As she lived fairly nearby she went home for her lunch.

Sue became very uncomfortable in this school and a downward spiral of deteriorating relationships set in. It became increasingly difficult to retrieve the situation and given the opportunity to change schools one and a half terms later, Sue moved on to what she saw as a more welcoming school. Afterwards, talking to the Head and to Sue, they both recognised that there had been an unusually large amount of tension in the school at the beginning of the year as a result of the appointment of the new Head, and this may have contributed to the class teachers' strong feelings of resistance to change. From the distance of a term Sue could identify some changes in Mrs. S's teaching style, such as use of word banks, putting colours with spellings on the wall, as a means of helping all the children in the class. Sue felt there had certainly been a move from the attitude expressed by Mrs. S at the beginning of the year in the words, 'I think they should all be left to sink or swim'. At the end of the year Sue felt that there were many difficulties with the new role of the Support Service which were not being addressed. She felt that there should be more flexibility, and that change could have been implemented more successfully in X School if a team of support teachers had gone in for a limited amount of time, doing in-service at the same time. She also felt that there was some clash of role between the support teachers and the advisers, although recent contact was eliminating this. She would have appreciated more contact with the inspection team over a school like X; the support teachers were being expected to bring about major change in schools without any change in status.

Comment

Sue's experience as a support teacher in X Primary School appeared to be unsuccessful. Obvious factors such as the teachers' intransigence with regard to changing practice and their negative attitudes towards children with special educational needs, the support teacher's rigid interpretation of her new role and her reluctance to invest time in developing relationships, could be seen as major contributors to this lack of success. There are, however, more complex issues which emerge from this case, and which will contribute to later discussion:

- (i) Although Sue's role was to work in the classroom, it appeared that in this case the whole institution was undergoing upheaval, the causes and effects of which were out of her control. Perhaps someone of higher status, such as an Inspector or Area Co-ordinator of Support Service, may have been more effective in persuading the class teachers that the changes in procedures were necessary.

- (ii) Within the structure of the Integrated Support Service there appeared to be no procedures for helping support teachers who were on the receiving end of overt hostility. The support teachers relied on colleagues in their area teams whom they met once a week, on Friday afternoons, time which was taken up with administration and meetings.
- (iii) If the complexity and flexibility of the role of the support teacher is not fully under-stood, then one particular aspect of the role, such as advising, can begin to dominate according to the aspirations of the personalities involved. In this case, despite some disparaging comments about inspectors and advisors, Sue appeared to take on more of a 'top down' advisory role, rather than starting in the classroom finding out what the teachers required, as recommended by the Headteacher.
- (iv) Sue's espousal of an advisory, 'outsider' role appeared to create some dilemmas for her as she was adamant in some of her statements that she 'was just an ordinary teacher'. At these times of being 'ordinary' she criticised the authority management for the system which she was being made to instigate. This dichotomous view must have created mixed reactions in the class teachers' reception of these new approaches.
- (iv) The work of support teaching relies to a great extent on spending break and lunchtimes, and some time after school, on working with class teachers. A question regarding support teachers' entitlement to normal working conditions could be posed. Sue strongly believed that she should have a lunchtime and made sure of this by going to her home on most days. This led to criticism from the Headteacher who had experienced different ways of working with other support teachers.
- (vi) Sue felt that although her own training for the new role had been fairly thorough, and that she had personally benefited from her union training, she did express a real need for more training in assertiveness skills. This could also be linked to the problems of withstanding hostility and the need for the feelings of the support teachers to be secure in such circumstances.

5.5 Joyce

Background

Joyce was an experienced teacher who had held two headships in a different authority, both ended through illness. She was a member of the team with which I had worked in a consultative capacity over the previous year. She had been made a team leader within the new Support Service, with four teachers, one ancillary and a part-time secretary. Joyce had taken on this role very reluctantly as she expressed a strong antagonism towards the management methods of the new Area Co-ordinator. She had agreed to my accompanying her in her work in a primary school, one day a week during the second half of the autumn term, her first term in this school. She also went into five other schools for half a day a week, as well as spending a day at her centre where five children, whose behaviour difficulties were perceived to be too difficult for integration into mainstream schools, were educated by a different teacher from the centre team each day. This left her half a day for organising her team and preparing materials for schools and in-service sessions.

Joyce's views on the change in the role of the Support Service

An interview with Joyce in the summer before her new support role in different schools elicited some clear views on the change. Although troubled initially she now felt more comfortable and believed that the new service could be made to work. She was looking forward to working with children in their own classrooms as she recognised the importance of the wider context for learning. Her greatest concerns centred on the fear of hostility on the part of the class teachers as she admitted that she had a 'need to feel needed'. She felt that her role was to be non-threatening, not to be seen as a tool of management or the inspectorate, nor as the expert:

....we should be on the side of the teachers, discrete, listen to them moaning and act as confidante. We must be trustworthy. We can learn from them. I've got to be a friend and I've got to know the school well. We've got to have flexibility - pick up any portmanteau.

(Interview transcript 25.7)

Speculation on possible constraints on the support role produced worries about appearing to condone practice in classrooms of which one did not approve, and 'internecine warfare among the staff' obliging her to take sides.

With regard to the authority as a whole Joyce believed there had not been enough consultation with schools, or even with the, then, remedial teachers. There had been

some insensitivity and unnecessary pressures surrounding the obligatory reapplication for their own jobs. Headteachers had been given an opportunity for consultation; they all had the relevant papers on their desks. There appeared to be a wide deviation in views towards the changes among heads, according to Joyce. The message about change had seldom got through to the classroom teachers. The greatest challenge which Joyce felt that she faced was to change classroom practice overall, not just as far as special educational needs was concerned. The 'stickiest wicket' was going to be questioning teachers' practice and classroom management and she intended to go slowly and be assured and sympathetic. Joyce's own in-service training needs were judged to be in the area of interpersonal skills for helping to deal with teachers.

Observing Joyce at work

The school in which Joyce was observed was a one-form entry, Church of England primary school, in a small town, part of a large conurbation. The school population reflected the mixed housing, some well preserved, middle class Georgian roads and some deteriorating, 1960s, low-rise council flats. A large number of Sikhs and Hindus had come to live in the town fairly recently and several classes had between thirty to forty per cent ethnic minority children.

By the latter half of the autumn term Joyce had established very strong, positive relationships with the teachers in the junior part of the school where she worked in the classrooms. Before school, during breaktime and lunchtime there were continual interchanges between Joyce and the teachers, mostly focusing on individual children and their needs. The social conversations that also took place revealed a considerable knowledge about the teachers' home lives on the part of Joyce. A quarter of the day was spent in each of the junior classrooms. During the three days on which I observed Joyce she brought in specially made or adapted materials to work with all the children under her focus. Joyce and the classteachers discussed the curriculum and the organisation for the following week. Generally during these discussions Joyce threw in what appeared to be casual suggestions for small changes and adaptations, particularly with regard to the amount of written recording and copying required from the children in all classes. For instance, when planning work for Wendy, an eight year old with literacy and behaviour problems, the classroom teacher suggested finding things for her from 'Basic English Skills'. Joyce responded:

It would be nicer if you could turn it into something from the topic. If she's secure let her go on. We need to reinforce her bright and confident days - make the work achievable on bad days, not too much fuss and not reinforce the bad days. We must have a strategy for the bad days - let her do alternatives.
(Field notes 2.11)

Similar conversations were observed with all the teachers, sometimes near the end of a lesson in the classroom, sometimes during break and lunchtime.

In all the classrooms issues such as beginnings, endings, transitions and discipline appeared to involve a seamless interchange between Joyce and the teachers. To an outsider it appeared to reflect very long-standing relationships which had, in reality, only a few days' provenance. Although in each room Joyce was responsible for an agreed group of children, both she and the classteacher interacted with children other than their own groups. For example, in a Year 5 class, Joyce had brought in a simple explanation card so that James, a boy with considerable learning and behavioural difficulties, could take part in the session on electricity along with his peers in the room. Joyce had also brought some extra wire, bulbs and switches so that James could have more practice. Although Joyce focused on James and another three children during this session on circuits she also offered support and advice to others in the class. Similarly the classteacher frequently came over and praised James for working so well. She commented that it was only the first time two weeks ago, during a session with Joyce, that James had not torn up his work, saying he hated it.

As well as supporting and collaborating with classteachers Joyce was often to be seen offering guidance and advice to the acting Headteacher. She discussed the in-service education needs of the school, suggesting sessions on organising paired reading for parents and on differentiation. As the school would need a teacher for the following term to cover a maternity leave, Joyce said she would contact a member of another centre who was looking for a different job. She arranged the timing of the special educational needs audit which the local authority was requiring schools to carry out. She sympathised strongly with the Head over the one teacher in the school who was refusing to instigate change of any kind in her classroom, including National Curriculum requirements, and offered strategies to ease her out of the school. Observing Joyce in this advisory mode was a reminder that she herself had been a headteacher twice.

Mrs. Y, the Year 5 teacher, was fulsome in her praise of Joyce during an interview. She felt that Joyce enabled the children with special educational needs in her class to partake of a much fuller curriculum:

The ones who I would probably say no, you're not going to do that because I just couldn't manage physically to cope with them doing it.....Children who were, so called, under the support teacher, were taken out and had something done with them and reappeared. Whereas this term we've worked alongside one another, actually doing the same work but obviously at different levels. Particularly, this term, I've used Joyce for practical work, and, I must admit, some of that practical work I would not have been able to do in the same way. They would just have had to have done it in a larger group and just watched, in a very controlled situation. They wouldn't have been able to so much of it themselves.

(Interview transcript 16.11)

There were drawbacks that Mrs. Y saw, however:

It's wonderful when you have somebody in here but it's for such a limited time. So, I had grave reservations, shall we say, about having somebody else in the room, 'cos I'd never worked with anybody in the same room. But it's worked out very well but having said that, it's the hour, the following hours that cause the problems. And also, I must admit, I wonder, yes, yes, they've had access to bits of the curriculum that they probably wouldn't do, but you do wonder with things like reading and writing how it's helping.....It's ingrained in us, really, isn't it? If their reading and writing is not coming on, and you feel it should be....In the past we've always looked at it, never mind if they haven't done their project work, you've kept up with the reading and writing and their maths.

(Interview transcript 16.11)

Despite this, overall, Mrs. Y was very enthusiastic about the work she had done with Joyce and thought it wonderful that Joyce was willing to do anything. She felt that her own practice had been influenced by Joyce's presence in that she now used more praise with all the children, but particularly those with special educational needs.

The week following the above interview the school was informed that Joyce was ill and would not be coming back until the following term. Two weeks later they were informed that Joyce had taken early retirement through ill health.

Joyce's views two terms later

The following summer, when approached, Joyce was willing to speak about her experiences in the new support teaching role. During a cassette-recorded interview in her own home she spoke at length about the new Integrated Support Service in a critical

mode. The following is a summary of her views under the main issues which she covered:

(i) Preparation for the change

Joyce believed that the preparation of the support teachers for the new role was inadequate. The service should have been closed for twenty days while appropriate in-service was given. Schools were not told properly about the change and therefore they perceived the support teachers as doing their old role with a little bit more thrown in.

(ii) Staffing of the Support Service

Where new support teachers were needed the Area Co-ordinator had a policy of taking people directly from the classroom, with no requirements for previous experience in the area of special educational needs. In Joyce's view this had presented her, as a team leader, with great problems in that these new support teachers required a great deal of support both in terms of knowledge of teaching techniques, materials, skills, and so on, and also the confidence to go into schools, and to run in-service sessions. Joyce also had doubts about the motivation of some of the new support teachers:

Many of them thought they were coming into a cushy number. They found they had absolutely no idea how you go about it.

(Interview transcript 23.7)

(iii) Expectations of the role

Joyce felt that the service was underfunded in terms of the number of staff expected to effect the change. Each support teacher had so many schools that:

...each teacher had so little time in school it's impossible to get the message across. A Head would say I have nine classes, maybe thirteen, and you have one afternoon here of two hours. Can you get round thirteen classes and deal with all our problems in two hours? The answer's plainly no.

(Interview transcript 23.7)

She also commented on the amount they were expected to do:

We were expected to use our own time for preparation. We were expected to supply, for instance, for each of the classes we visited, amended texts, flow diagrams, grids - sort of differentiated, all kinds of differentiated stuff which led to folks falling asleep over their computers at twelve o'clock and two o'clock the following morning, and the pressure becoming unbearable.

(Interview transcript 23.7)

(iv) Relationships with schools and teachers

Joyce saw the strength of the relationship between the support teacher and the teachers as the most crucial aspect of the role:

The first requirement of anyone going into a school in this way is to build up relationships within the school.....They [area/LEA management] left out the human element. They were dealing much more with maybe, a management

style. It's no good treating a school as a factory producing radios and the teachers as though they're putting screws in the backs of radios.

(Interview transcript 23.7)

Joyce felt very strongly that she was there to make teachers feel better about their teaching and that these feeling would then be passed on to the children. She was prepared to endorse curriculum and teaching approaches which she did not necessarily approve of if this gained entry to a teacher's trust.

Overall Joyce expressed resentment over the way the support teachers had been treated in this area, in that they had to account for every moment of their day through filling in pro forma and getting these signed by headteachers. She was sad for herself at having had to leave a job which she enjoyed and in which she had the approbation of all the schools with which she had contact, and she was sad at the pressure that her colleagues were under. She also felt that the three year timespan purportedly allowed by the local authority for the Integrated Support Service to succeed in successfully integrating children with special educational needs into mainstream primary schools was unrealistic. At the time of this final interview Joyce was giving private tuition to many of the children she had taught in the Remedial Reading Centre and in the schools.

Comment

From the fairly brief observations of Joyce in one school she appeared to be carrying out her role in an exemplary manner. She had quickly gained the trust and friendship of the teachers and the Head, and many of the parents. She supported teachers and yet appeared to suggest non-threatening ways in which their practice could be changed for the benefit of the children. Perhaps most importantly, she was prepared to teach, whole classes if necessary, and her credibility as a teacher was beyond suspicion. It could be said, however, that the price of this exemplarity was Joyce's health. Below are some specific points emerging from this section:

(i) Relationships with the classroom teachers were obviously a very important element of the role in this case. The question could be raised as to whether Joyce was, in fact, creating dependency on the part of the class teacher. Joyce had said she 'needed to be needed' and the teachers reflected on the extent to which they missed Joyce's presence and support when she was not in the room. If this was the case, to what extent would it ever be possible for the class teachers to take on the responsibility for children with special educational needs as their own?

- (ii) Joyce placed great emphasis on her positive relationships with the classteachers, and she was prepared to go along with practices of which she disapproved in order to gain the trust of teachers. This could have led to difficulty, however, if at any time she needed to extract herself from certain stances taken towards curriculum or pedagogy.
- (iii) The area management style of running the support service teams appeared to be one of tight control, with extensive mechanisms of reporting in place. There did not, however, seem to be any means of offering the support teachers, particularly the team leaders, any guidance or moral support in their work. It is possible that Joyce's health breakdown could have been prevented by help with prioritising tasks.
- (iv) Joyce had worked extensively on a model of direct teaching in the classrooms. Whilst this had gained her a great deal of credibility in the perceptions of the teachers we do not know how she would have eased out of this model into one of consultancy had she remained.
- (v) The job that Joyce was attempting to do appeared impossible. The only way to serve so many schools in such a short time would be to act in an advisory or consultative manner but this role would only be effective once credibility had been established. A way of breaking this apparently self-defeating circle would be to stage entry into each school, or to spend a considerable amount of time preparing the schools for the change in role.

5.6 J County - some general conclusions

The education authority within J County had invested time, money and bureaucratic procedures in changing the support service provision for children with special educational needs. The short time span which had elapsed from the beginning of the change to this research precluded any judgement as to long term effectiveness. In two of the schools visited, the support teachers had established their credibility, were respected and listened to by the teachers and were aware of the need to introduce further change. In a third case the support teacher had established an enormous amount of goodwill towards the Service before leaving through illness. But nowhere was it as straightforward as the policy documents made it seem.

On the whole the support teachers I met expressed a greater feeling of worth in their wider role and found the new approach more stimulating, if more demanding. They had wider boundaries and met more people: teachers, children, other staff and parents. These wider boundaries meant they had to develop interpersonal skills to deal with the whole curriculum. In one or two cases there was a feeling of lowered morale and self-confidence, and an increasing suspicion that the support service was being exploited in order to spread the financial net more thinly.

Mostly class teachers welcomed support teachers as people with whom to share problems, to consult with and to gain ideas from. They saw the support teacher as someone who would provide practical ideas which would enable them to fulfil National Curriculum requirements. Support teachers were also a sounding board for feelings of frustration at the perceived lack of consultation about changes in special educational provision.

As far as it was possible to judge from interviews, informal conversations and observation, children benefited from a class teacher who felt personally supported and thus was more sensitive to their needs. Pupils were often able to complete the simplified classroom tasks and thus felt as though they were keeping up with their peers.

The issues which emerge from this case study of a changing Support Service have been outlined in the Comment sections at the end of each account and these will contribute to a further analysis in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Analysis and Discussion

In his report, therefore, the evaluator aims to sharpen discussion, disentangle complexities, isolate the significant from the trivial and to raise the level of sophistication of debate.

(Parlett and Hamilton 1972 p.15)

I repeat this quotation as an illustration of my aims for the final two chapters of this thesis. The field work for this research took place over three and a half years. The analysis and write up have been carried out during an era of complex changes and major legal and attitudinal shifts in the area under investigation. The initial questions, however, which focused on the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers and the possibility of effecting change in practice and any consequences for children with special educational needs, are equally pertinent today. Indeed, forthcoming legislation (Green Paper 21.10.97) which advocates a decrease in segregated education and more help for mainstream teachers, will undoubtedly lead to an increase in partnerships within classrooms. As well as partnerships focused on children with special educational needs, the number of teachers working in tandem includes curriculum co-ordinators, advisory teachers, senior managers with less experienced teachers, and some local inspectors. The National Literacy and Numeracy Projects will depend on consultants working in schools with classroom teachers. Enhanced educational provision depends on the effectiveness of these relationships and this generalised statement is a starting point for my attempt to '*sharpen the discussion and disentangle the complexities*' throughout this chapter.

Chapters 4 and 5 gave accounts of the work of support teachers in an inner city junior school and in four primary schools in a southern county. The first case study was approached under the aegis of the research questions. Consideration of this data led to preliminary coding of issues for observational focus in the second case study data collection (Chapter 3, p.78), which the same research questions underpinned. At this point I chose to use simple coding categories to aid greater efficiency in order '*to narrow down the focus of the study*' (Bryman and Burgess 1994 p.7) while at the same time '*continually reviewing fieldnotes in order to determine whether new questions could fruitfully be asked*' (Bryman and Burgess *ibid*). When I began the second strand of my

research I thought that this case study might provide some contrasting themes. Although I found that some new questions could indeed be asked I discovered several issues in the County of J which had also arisen in the London Borough of A. For the rest of this chapter I discuss themes which arise from an analysis of the two case studies. Some of these themes are synthesised with issues already identified in the literature chapter and throughout the two accounts; some of them touch on issues which have emerged from the data rather than from the literature. Before moving on, it will be helpful to repeat the themes which I identified from the literature. These were: clarity of definition, initiation, change, and expertise and theoretical understanding. As a result of my work I have modified and added to these themes as presented below.

6.1 Entry

I have chosen to widen Fullan's (1992) term '*initiation*' as an analytical theme to one of 'entry'. Fullan uses the concept to describe '*the process leading up to and including the decision to proceed with implementation*' (p.50). Within the work of all the support teachers in this research, entry points during the process of implementation appeared to be as important as the first entry point. I will begin by looking at the original reasons for the first entry into the schools by these support teachers.

In the first study the support teachers were encouraged into the school by the borough management to help an institution in difficulties. The school appeared to be asking for help, the support service wanted to broaden its role and national changes in the approach towards special educational needs provision were in the background. In the second case study, county policy had enforced an expansion of role for support teachers who were now obliged to work in classrooms instead of centres or segregated situations in schools. Although these two cases seemed to have had different starts, it is possible to identify an important similarity in that the views of classroom teachers about this new model of support did not appear to have been considered, and there was little depth in the preparation of the support teachers themselves. If, as Fullan (1992) suggests, it is more helpful to '*conceive of participation as something that begins during initiation*' (p.63) we can see that in both cases an inauspicious initiation may have been made.

Another similarity can be seen in the issue of entry into classrooms. In all cases the support teachers had to counteract expectations and wishes by the class teachers that children identified as requiring support would be withdrawn. Some support teachers,

such as Sue, were directly confronted by the class teacher demanding that the children should be taken out. Some class teachers, such as D and H, were not included in the original discussion of plans for what some might see as a major invasion of their classrooms.

All the support teachers achieved a physical entry into the classrooms. In some cases, they went little further than this and made no kind of entry into the whole-class curriculum or the pedagogy of the classroom teacher. Two main support approaches can be identified: a theoretical approach which began with explanations of the intended changes, had set, written down aims and did not adapt to the needs of individual class teachers; almost the opposite approach was one which began with a presence inside or just on the edge of the classroom, contributing small scale, practical suggestions, and with no attempt to give theoretical justifications either for the changes in support work, or for the nature of any suggestions. There is also evidence of a considered deferral of entry and a continuation of the previous role on part of the support teacher, as in the case of Angela into David's classroom.

It would be possible to continue with this theme of entry and examine the extent to which collaborative relationships had been established, or the extent to which successful staff development on an institutional basis had developed, both factors regarded by support services as instrumental towards promoting effective provision for children with special educational needs. These factors will be addressed in the remaining themes covered below.

6.2 Time

Although not seen as a major theme in the literature, the issue of 'time' can be identified in terms of throwing light on the quality of relationships between support teachers and classroom teachers. I would like to develop this theme in the following ways:

(i) who controls the time

Hargreaves (1994) posits the view that a technical-rational dimension sees time subject to managerial manipulation in order to promote educational change, the ideas behind which emanate from elsewhere. In the County of J, the support teachers were allocated to schools as a result of local authority managerial manipulation. Decisions about how their time was split among schools were made at a lower managerial level. Once in

school, however, the support teachers exercised a great deal of autonomy as to how they used their own time. In the London Borough of A, the support teachers were more instrumental in the decision making behind their allocation to C School. Again, once in school their autonomy in organising their own time appeared almost absolute. Support teachers take time to do administration and have team meetings within their allocated working hours. Angela, Deirdre and Joyce spent 'snatched time' (Campbell 1985) working with teachers, whereas Sue considered that she had a right to her own time. In the case of the Borough of A support team, they also had time for their own staff development and for planning meetings within the normal school hours.

In contrast, the classroom teachers, in common with most teachers in the primary sector (Hargreaves *op cit*), had almost no time away from the children to use for planning or professional development. Not only is there no choice for primary classroom teachers about leaving the children, as pastoral and legal considerations must be stronger with younger children, but also a perception of higher status may be designated to those who have the choice about time spent at the chalk face.

(ii) different concepts of time and the 'colonization' of time

As well as the issue of amounts of time, as above, differing concepts or perceptions of what to do with time can be identified. Consultancy and planning were part of all the support teachers' roles in these case studies. It followed, therefore, that time had to be found to carry out these activities. Joyce, for instance, could be seen holding discussions with teachers before school, during break and at lunchtime. Vicky brought in articles and resources at break times to share with teachers whose classes she was not working with directly. It is here that Hargreaves' (*op cit*) concepts of monochronic and polychronic time are most helpful in revealing the dissonance between the class teachers and most of the support teachers in their perceptions of time. The support teachers could be said to operate with a concept of monochronic time, where they have a clear linear aim of working towards predetermined plans for changing curricular approaches. On the other hand, classroom teachers could be seen as operating with a concept of polychronic time, where they are doing several things at once. Of course, the split is not quite so straightforward. For instance, support teachers get drawn into a multitude of different activities, albeit with the same aim of enhancing provision for children with special educational needs, and classroom teachers, especially since the advent of the national curriculum, tend to have more coherently organised activities going on. Nevertheless,

a classroom teacher with many simultaneous concerns may feel unable to justify the amount of time demanded by some support teachers.

This leads to a consideration of how the classteachers' time was 'colonized' by the support teachers to a great extent. If we accept the idea that teachers' time is divided into 'front regions' (p.40 Chapter 2 above) and 'back regions', there is considerable evidence that support teachers colonize these back regions where normally it would be expected that relaxation and stress relief took place. These 'back regions' are built into the timetables of the support teachers, particularly in the Borough of A, but in most primary schools have to be taken opportunistically. It could, therefore, be problematic in terms of relationships if support teachers occupy a great deal of this relaxation time.

(iii) the operation of a model of support teaching on 'non-existent' time

I have already mentioned the frequent use by support teachers of the spaces before, between and after normal class-contact time to communicate with classroom teachers. In the first case study, as it was a pilot scheme, the support teachers built time into their work in school and in their own centre to carry out administration and preparation tasks. They were, therefore, not obliged to use so much of their own time. This practice would prove very expensive in terms of support teacher time and would not be feasible in an era when all hours are costed, as is now the case in many authorities.

Normally, as with three of the support teachers in J County, the majority of their time is expected to be spent in classrooms with children. This means that their own 'back regions' are non-existent, as all time away from children is spent in consultation, travelling between schools or preparing resources for individual children. This can lead to a great deal of strain for the conscientious support teacher, as was seen with Joyce, who retired from illness. When a support teacher attempted to create some time for herself, such as Sue, she was criticised by the school. Where a headteacher was completely behind the change in model, as with Angela, it was possible for them to create some flexibility within school hours for the work of the support teachers. Generally, however, where support teachers maintained a focus on individual children (and in J County the special needs statementing process obliged them to fulfil this commitment) no allowance was made for the time required to produce learning resources for the teachers to use.

6.3 Expertise

A consideration of the notion of expertise throws light on the nature of the relationship between the support teachers and the classroom teachers. A large part of the work of support teaching has been characterised as expertise being passed to the classroom teacher in order to enhance provision for children with special educational needs. This concept is not, however, without its tensions and dilemmas. Although much of the educational literature takes this model for granted, a consideration of the two case studies in this research reveals tensions and dilemmas within this assumption.

First of all, I would like to consider what types of expertise support services claim. From the backgrounds of the support teachers in this research we can see that all have some kind of professional development beyond the basic teacher training. Most were currently engaged in gaining or had already gained higher degrees or diplomas, as well as participating in in-service sessions provided by their management. Some of this in-service was specifically related to the changing role of the support teacher; some was related to developing a wider knowledge of legislation, strategies for special educational needs provision, particularly in the area of literacy. The support teachers in the County of J had received one afternoon (two hours) of input on the interpersonal skills needed for their new role.

This expertise, especially that in the form of extra qualifications, could be said to give status and raised self-esteem. It could also be said to justify the higher salary grade which these teachers, particularly in the first case study, were allocated. This same expertise, however, could appear to produce problems by creating a distance between the support teachers and the class teachers, or by creating expectations on the part of the class teachers which the support teachers felt were too demanding. For instance, Sue strongly resisted being labelled as an expert by schools, and then in the next sentence said, *'In other ways, I want them to think I am, because I do have expertise'* (Interview transcript 22.9). Another dilemma can be identified when Peter strongly resists telling D what to do in a practical sense and then parades his own theoretical expertise by recommending books and authors on pedagogy.

The support teachers in the Borough of A, and Sue in J County, seem to equate their own beliefs about how children learn experientially with their beliefs in how classroom teachers should learn about changing their approaches towards special needs provision. Angela,

Deirdre and Joyce, on the other hand, had no qualms about sharing their expertise in terms of practical tips and advice. Both of these styles of passing on expertise have their own dangers. Peter, Vicky and Sue, for example, in their determination that the class teachers should bring about their own new practices through an understanding of the theoretical background were not only in danger of creating antagonism, but also missed the chance to gain credibility as non-expert, or ordinary teachers. The danger for Angela, Deirdre and Joyce lay more in creating a model of dependency on the part of the class teacher in terms of provision of day-to-day extras for the children, or seemingly 'magic' tricks to work on curriculum materials to increase accessibility. The danger also lay in teachers using these techniques without questioning either their own over all approach to teaching and learning, or that of the school, or the education system as a whole. Eraut (1994), looking at the development of professional knowledge, comments on how it is *'increasingly recognized that experts often cannot explain the nature of their own expertise'* (p.102). Could we say that in the case of the support teachers, their levels of awareness with regard to their own expertise, both in terms of knowledge about teaching children with special educational needs and in terms of working with other adults, were not highly developed? Eraut goes on to consider how different kinds of knowledge, particularly propositional knowledge and process knowledge, should be seen as equally important. Could we say that the knowledge or expertise being given mainly by the support teachers in the first case study was of the process kind, and that in the second case study was mainly of the propositional kind?

To sum up the tensions within this theme of expertise, some support teachers felt the need to deny their own expertise in order to attempt to set up an empowering or genuinely collaborative relationship with class teachers. Other support teachers manifested their expertise in terms of sharing basic classroom techniques without challenging the hegemony within the system of special educational needs provision. A discussion of any resolution of this dilemma which has been identified within the research data will take place in the final chapter below.

6.4 The model

Throughout my research, and within the literature, it is possible to identify contradictions within adopted models of educational provision for children with special educational needs. As can be identified within the literature, at the end of Chapter 2, the 1980s was

purported to have seen a shift from segregated and individualised practice, to inclusive teaching where a consideration of the appropriateness of the curriculum and pedagogy was as, if not more, important than identification of particular difficulties within children. Legislation in the 1990s may have rescinded some of these inclusive practices but that is a discussion taken up in my final chapter.

The support team in the Borough of A were unequivocal in their promotion of a 'curriculum deficit' model of special educational needs, where any learning difficulties were seen to reside within the curriculum and the wider provision of the school. Their original documentation shows almost no acknowledgement of particular individualised learning difficulties, referring to whole school or whole curriculum change and stipulating that support for children with special educational needs would take the form of joint consultancy, joint curriculum planning, monitoring of children's classroom progress and project initiatives to benefit all children. The word 'dogmatism' can perhaps be used as a description of the apparently unambivalent approach to their plans, their formal and informal meetings with teachers, and their initial work in the classroom.

One could speculate that this high level of inflexibility made it very difficult for the support teachers to 'enter' some relationships in any meaningful way, as was the case with H in School C. In this particular school, however, once inside the classroom, the very high needs of some children, both in terms of learning and behaviour, necessitated a great deal of direct intervention by the support teachers with certain individuals. In fact, it often appeared that more time was spent containing some children than was spent on promoting the new approaches to the curriculum, a factor not really acknowledged by the support team. This support team had a sophisticated awareness of factors which influenced educational provision nationally, in the Borough of A, and in C School, particularly in terms of equal rights issues. They discussed the subject of equal access to the curriculum in the staffroom and among themselves and the name they gave to the pilot scheme reflected this terminology. They did not seem, however, to embrace a position where equal access to education could, in fact, mean greater individual support for some children.

In the second case study, county policy documents and support service newsletters spelt out the intention to change to a model of supporting children in class, participating in the normal curriculum. There was some private recognition that educational provision in the

county had not been judged as particularly sound, and the demands of change created by the national curriculum were also recognised. Whereas these needs for change were to some extent laid at the feet of the support teachers, (to be discussed in the later section on 'Stratagems'), intentions for change were never as radical as those held by the support team in the first case study. It was clear that the model of segregating individual children was to be left behind.

The four support teachers in the second case study appeared to espouse the new model of provision and could provide practical justification for such change. All the teachers moved their location for working to inside the classrooms to some extent. Variations in the models of provision went from working with individual children or groups outside the classroom on material unconnected to the curriculum, through sitting beside individual children 'translating' complicated material and working with separate groups inside the classroom, to joint planning with the teacher and provision of materials to enable full participation by all children. Nowhere was it apparent that the support teachers here were overtly talking to teachers about fundamentally changing their methods or curriculum. The exception was Sue, who achieved little success in confronting the teachers with a stated need for change. This need was acknowledged by the other support teachers but a 'softly, softly' approach was seen as essential.

In contrast to the term 'dogmatism' I ascribed to the support team in the first case study, I would apply the term 'pragmatism' in the second case study, at least to three of these support teachers. In their role as putative change agents this 'pragmatism' may have represented a disguise for their own ambivalence regarding the change of model of provision for children with special educational needs. The prevarication could also have stemmed from a wish to support teachers in a nurturing way, reducing stress and thereby possibly colluding with inappropriate practice, an issue which will be explored further under a later heading. Bureaucratic processes, which meant that children who were statemented, who were identified as dyslexic, whose parents were assertive in their demands, had to be provided for and monitored, also contributed towards preventing a change of model.

In considering this theme of 'The model' it is salutary to realise that Tomlinson's (1982) comment on the goals of special education and the underdevelopment of theory and practice therein appears equally relevant to more recent, and, I would submit, current

practice. Returning to Eraut’s (op cit) reference to the need for ‘*process knowledge*’ it is possible to identify a need for theoretical understanding to underpin process. In this case, the theoretical understanding would incorporate knowledge of change implementation and interpersonal skills, more of which in a later section.

6.5 Stratagems and stalking horses

In Chapter 2 above I referred to Hargreaves’ and Fullan’s (1992) discussion on teacher development as self-understanding and the argument as to whether changes in attitudes and beliefs precede or follow changes in behaviour. Within a wider field of social psychology Hogg and Vaughan (1995) consider the concept of finding ways to persuade people to act differently, even resorting to using tricks, thereby coming to think in a different way and continuing to carry out the desired change. While in no way implying that the support teachers in these case studies set out consciously to ‘trick’ anyone, it is possible to identify areas within the research where reasons for entering a school, a classroom, a relationship with a class teacher, were perceived differently by the supporters and the recipients. As already discussed above, many of the support teachers here did not seem to have a clearly defined rationale for their own practice, which, of course, could have been one reason for a lack of openness with their class teacher partners. As these differing perceptions could be seen as an impediment towards developing effective collaborative relationships I will discuss some of the ‘stratagems’ which may be identified from analysis of these case studies.

At first I drew up and used a matrix, as below, with which to try and classify the relationships between support teachers and classroom teachers:

1 Support teacher clear in own mind	3 Support teacher open with client
2 Support teacher not clear in own mind	4 Support teacher not open with client

In trying to place support teachers into cells, however, the complexity of the connection between these attributes and the apparent effectiveness of the support teacher/class teacher relationship became clearer. For instance, Peter was open with D about being there to change the curriculum, and he appeared to be clear in his own mind about his espoused

philosophy of educational provision. The effect of this openness and clarity did not, however, prove to be particularly positive towards the relationship. D appeared to question his own abilities more and to reveal low self-esteem. His prolonged absences from the classroom when Peter was in there could be interpreted as escaping from facing up to alternative models of interaction with the children. Of course, the nature of Peter's honesty could be questioned in that the language he used and the persona he presented may not have been the most appropriate for D, a subject taken up later.

In contrast to this, most of the support teachers observed in the second case study were not as 'up front' about their reasons for working in classrooms. County documents and support service newsletters had made it clear that '*All schools are requested to adopt a broader-based curriculum strategy for meeting special educational needs*', and there must be '*recognition of the problem as a teaching problem*' (J County Council 1988 Sections 33.1). Nevertheless, as we saw in the account, the majority of classroom teachers saw the entry of the support teachers into their rooms as a new mechanism for working with the children, and nothing to do with them as teachers. Angela and Deirdre said nothing overtly about changing the curriculum and pedagogy. Deirdre spoke about using practical ideas as a stratagem towards getting teachers to view their provision of resources in a different way. Joyce, who was open with headteachers and some class teachers, admitted that she was prepared to endorse curriculum and teaching approaches that she did not approve of if this gained entry to the teacher's trust.

Perhaps a useful way to conceptualise this theme of 'stratagems and stalking horses' is to use a support teacher's own concept of the '*support teacher as salesperson*' (Cassette recording Interview 18.2). If support teachers are '*into selling, salesmanship, the package*' does this lead into disguising the package, wrapping it up, or calling it another name? If we see it as a series of packages, such as, firstly, a parcel of suitable curricular and pedagogical approaches, secondly, a change in the role of the support service, and thirdly, a change in educational provision for children with special educational needs, and eventually, all children, then consciously using stratagems to ensure acceptance of the first package may be an effective way to start. Does this kind of stealth work or does it persuade teachers that provision for children with special educational needs is just a series of tricks? The package, if it is presented in the form of a stalking horse, may continue to be seen as an invader, and not absorbed into general practice.

6.6 Relationships

This theme is directly linked with my original research questions which explore the nature of the relationships between support teachers and classroom teachers. The concluding chapter will address the wider question which attempts to identify the elements of this relationship which need to be developed to ensure effective practice. At this stage, it is helpful to explore how the theme of relationships emerges from the literature and from the research data.

Within the two case studies three main types of relationships can be identified:

- Support teacher - support teacher

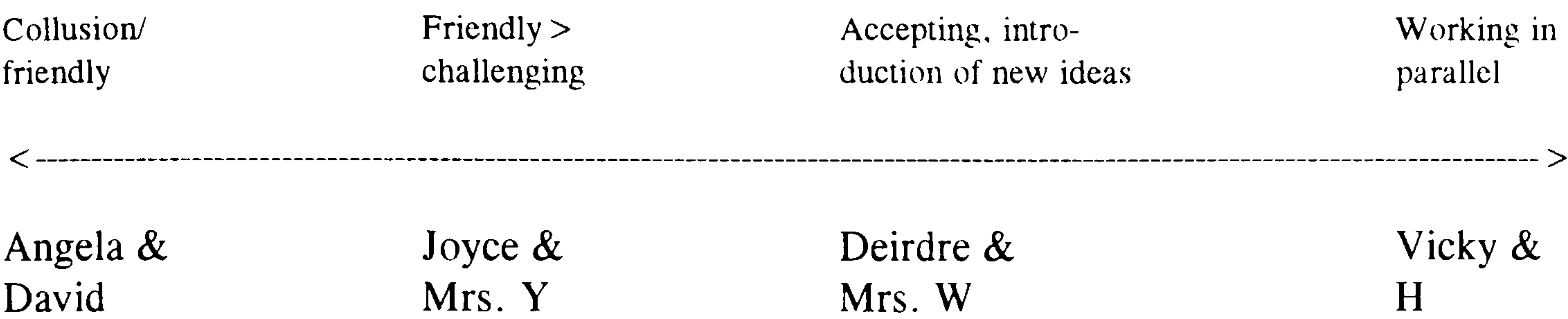
When support teachers work in a team within schools, as was the case with C School, and as Angela's team was planning for the following year, there appears to be a built in system of professional support for each other. There are advantages here for the support teachers, whose needs for back up and stress reduction were evident. The major disadvantage, and this was apparent in C School, could be that the relationships between the support teachers prevent relationships with school staff from developing. Angela, who always ate her lunch in one school, was on very friendly terms with most of the staff. Similarly, Deirdre knew some teachers well by the end of the year through meeting in the staffroom.

- Support teacher - children

When support teachers regularly withdraw children either as individuals, or in very small groups, close relationships can develop, sometimes almost of a therapeutic nature. Working with children in the classroom precludes this type of relationship as the support is intended to be dissipated to the teacher and to other members of the class. During my research, it was possible to identify some children who had enjoyed this 'therapeutic' relationship in previous years. Sandra, Ian and Donald in C School come to mind. One could ask here whether, if the standard of class teaching had been more effective, these children would not have needed such a relationship outside the classroom. Or one could ask whether there may be other such children in mainstream schools whose education, and whose quality of life, may be enhanced by such individual relationships.

• Support teacher - class teacher

First of all I would like to provide a continuum of the types of relationships which seemed to exist between the support teachers and the class teachers. I have not attempted to classify all the relationships I observed, but to give some examples.



There are several reasons that one could conjecture to account for close, friendly relationships between support teachers and class teachers. Support teaching is an isolated, potentially lonely job, where one sees colleagues with the same agenda only once or twice a week. Placed in a welcoming school with a sociable staff it may be difficult to resist being drawn into the personal and professional culture. Class teachers may have been known from other schools, or may have been previous colleagues. All these factors applied to Angela in her relationships with the teachers in Y County Primary School. In order to preserve this comfortable feeling of being welcomed, and to maintain friendly relationships, Angela may have been colluding with staff to prevent any development in her role, and thus to prevent probable change with regard to provision for children with special educational needs in the classrooms. A reference to Shinn, Lehmann and Wong (1984) is useful here in that it is possible to have too much support and too little challenge.

Observing her working with Mrs. Y it was possible to see how the practice in the classroom was influenced by Joyce's contribution. The class teacher herself was able to identify that she had changed her approach in order to enable all the children to participate in classroom activities such as design technology. Before entering this school Joyce had voiced her 'need to feel needed' and her greatest concerns centred on the fear of hostility. She did, therefore, put great effort into building positive, friendly relationships with the staff. She appeared to have succeeded without reducing her ability to challenge teachers

in their practice. The teachers did say, however, that when Joyce was not there it was difficult to continue with the new ideas.

Deirdre also built up strong, positive relationships with the teachers in the school while introducing changes to resources and curriculum materials. From a wariness at the beginning of the year, the teachers, on the whole, became friendly and welcoming by the end. They were very appreciative of Deirdre's practical suggestions. At the end of the year Mrs. W said that *'I feel as though she's there for the children and not for me'* (Interview transcripts 13.7). Attempting to describe the relationship between Deirdre and Mrs. W one could say that while it was friendly and supportive it did not appear to be challenging or moving towards change on the class teacher's part.

Moving to the far end of this continuum, one could question whether any sort of relationship developed between Vicky and H, the word 'parallel' being used here to denote a lack of connection. Speculation as to the reasons for this could acknowledge Vicky's clear and determined agenda which may not have been appropriate to this class at this time, or could recognise H's overriding concern with the very difficult behaviour of many of his class and the consequent distraction from considering changes in his approach to teaching.

We can return here to Visser's (1986) preference for the term *'teacher-enabler'* rather than support teacher as a way of overcoming the tension between on the one hand offering a form of social support, and on the other hand a means of change and improving the recipient's working practice. Whichever term we use, the relationship is still a form of social interaction which can be enhanced or otherwise by the nature of the social skills ascribed to both participants. For example, to challenge or criticise the professional practice of a class teacher without souring the relationship takes a considered personal communication style. Similarly, for a class teacher to work with another adult and accept the possible need for change requires a high degree of confidence, self-acceptance and well-developed 'soft skills' (Jersild 1955, Elliott 1991), an area being explored through the increase of mentors in schools (Fish 1995). As Gray and Wilcox (1995) say when discussing hostility and conflict in the change process.

They [individual teachers] 'clung on' to past practices, arguing that things had always been done the way they were doing them. They had, at the same time, built up defences to keep out threatening messages from outsiders. They were reluctant to attempt change 'for fear it might fail and were convinced that change

was someone else's job, not theirs.

(p.254)

Skills needed by support teachers to optimise the quality of these relationships with classroom teachers can be identified in the literature (section 2.5.1 Ch.2 above) and will also form an aspect of the final conclusions of this thesis. In terms of this theme, it is important to recognise that the relationships which support teachers enter into in the course of their role are multi-layered, and of differing quality according to the context.

6.7 Credibility of the support teachers

In a report on support teaching HMI (1989) highlighted the disparity in quality of provision, ranging from teachers without extra qualifications doing the job at the end of their careers to highly qualified personnel acting in an effective capacity for the whole school. This range provided by the DES seems to imply that teachers at the end of their careers may not be performing their role as effectively as the highly qualified personnel. From my research I would assert that the support teachers I have observed cannot be fitted into the typologies provided within the HMI Report: a more complicated, less definable, typology involving personal as well as professional qualities of individual support teachers may be more helpful in evaluating effectiveness.

Much of the literature on support teaching (Andrews 1992, Bowers 1989) covers those support teachers who are expected to act to some degree as change agents, either with the whole school, or with individual teachers. The credibility of these support teachers in the perception of the class teachers must have an effect on the relationship between them. This credibility is affected by many factors, some of which arise from the literature and the data and will be examined here.

Shinn, Lehmann and Wong (1984), in their discussion of support, refer to the quality or type of supporter and their own hinterland as contributing factors to the relationship between supporter and recipient. There are times, however, when this hinterland could dominate the change process. In School C, Borough of A, it is possible to identify how some of the interests of the support team, namely, children's literature, curriculum and resource organisation, dominated the relationships with the school staff, regardless of the professed needs of individual teachers. In the County of J, where the support teachers who featured in this research were, on the whole less well qualified and, for the most part,

at the end of their careers, there was positive feedback from class teachers as to the sensitivity of approach and adaptability of their partners in the classroom. Having considered the continuum of relationships in the section above, it could be said that some of these relationships were too adaptable and insufficiently challenging. On the other hand, it may be that the hinterland belonging to teachers at the end of their careers is less likely to give rise to self interest in terms of professional ambition than that belonging to teachers who see support work as a step up the managerial ladder.

The support teachers interviewed in the second case study referred to the appointment of new people in the role who had come directly from the classroom with no experience of special educational needs. Two of the support team in the first case study had no special needs qualifications and no teaching experience specifically connected with special educational needs before joining the support service. The balance between employing support teachers who appear credible in terms of recent classroom experience and those whose work with children with special needs can inform their relationships with classroom teachers is a difficult one to strike by managers of support services.

Credibility in the eyes of classroom teachers does not only stem from qualifications or specific experience, however. As we saw in the first case study, teachers like D and H discounted any possibility of change occurring because of the sort of children in their school. They threw out challenges to the support teachers to 'show us how it's done'. Although there may be many dangers for a support teacher taking on a role of demonstration teacher, there are also many gains, if done successfully, in acquiring credibility in the eyes of the class teachers. Joyce, in the County of J, spent time taking the whole class. This appeared to be a worthwhile investment in enhancing the quality of the relationship with the class teacher involved. Taking on a role like this could also be said to enable the support teacher to develop empathy with the classroom teacher and resist an overly theoretical or inappropriate approach to change.

The success of the interaction between the support teacher and the classroom teacher is a factor of the social skills which comprise such a large proportion of the role of support teaching. From personal experience as a teacher educator I would say that training in interpersonal skills is missing from the initial teacher training programme, and exists only to a very small extent in the training of support teachers. Lacey and Lomas (1993) in their study of support teaching felt that teachers are often unable to separate interpersonal

and interprofessional relations, and that due to lack of training, disagreements and conflicts can be magnified without resolution. The level of self awareness needed by support teachers to assess the degree to which they have to establish their own credibility is a factor which may be difficult to teach on in-service courses, but greater insight into personal communication styles and social exchange theory, for instance, would contribute towards the quality of the relationship with the class teacher.

In the nature of illuminative research one chooses to elaborate certain themes. One is, however, also aware of all that is '*left on the cutting room floor*' (Walker 1992) as a result. In the final chapter I will synthesise the issues arising from these themes, and touch on some wider areas, as I draw together the concluding responses to my original research questions.

Chapter 7

Reflections and moving on

This final chapter is divided into four sections. The first section contains reflections on how the research was carried out and considers some of the limitations and constraints involved. The second section looks at recent legislation and literature and their application to this area of research. The third section draws together conclusions to the research questions, and the final part of the chapter examines possibilities for developing some of the issues included in the conclusions.

7.1 Reflections on the process of the research

When this research began, the intended outcomes were an evaluation report for the Chief Inspector, London Borough of A, and a Ph.D. thesis. The first outcome became redundant as the Chief Inspector left his post, and I left my job in the borough for one in higher education. This enabled me to continue the research, on a different basis, and subsequently I had the opportunity to broaden my data collection in another local education authority.

Walker (1991) suggests four kinds of problems which face researchers: problems of selection, finding out too much, not finding out enough, discovering something. This offers a useful framework to reflect on my own methodology. As the person who initiated the project which forms the basis of my first case study, and then became the evaluator, and as someone who had worked in the role under examination for the previous six years, my professional and personal investment at the beginning of the research was considerable. There was, therefore, a temptation to select too many sources of evidence and to be diverted by too many connecting issues. The establishment of other boundaries such as time and location were more straightforward. Having two days a week to work in the field, a reasonable luxury for a part-time researcher, led to a lack of discrimination in terms of deciding on specific foci for exploration. There was also the sense of excitement at the beginning of the project that this would make a large difference

to the life of the school and the work of both the support and class teachers, and this led to an urgency to capture the whole picture.

As Walker (op cit p. 110) says:

Only rarely can the design for an evaluation or piece of research fully contain the range and quantity of the information generated by the process of investigation. In even the most parsimonious study, the investigators learn more than they tell, or feel able to tell.'

Once the concept of discarding some of this generated information was accepted, it became easier to clarify my aims, and to develop research questions. The interchange with my supervisor was instrumental in assisting with this focus and process of rejection. As with all case study research, the process of refinement continued. This refinement occurred particularly when reviewing the data collected from the first case study, before going on to look at support teaching in a different education authority. Just as in School C, the support team had, for a variety of reasons referred to in the account, allowed themselves to become diverted from their main task, in my initial data collection I covered a wide range of issues, many of which were discarded as they did not illuminate the research questions. In contrast, as I could use the thinking from the first case study to sharpen my approach to data collection (see Chapter 3) the discarding process was nowhere near as great.

The problem of '*not finding out enough*' is more difficult to reflect upon. Can anyone ever be certain that there is not another insight just around the corner? In both case studies I felt there were some constraints on interview respondents. The class teachers in School C must have regarded me as part of an apparent invasion of their school. This led to some reticence on the part of two or three teachers in answering questions, particularly at the end of the project. In itself, however, this reticence was significant as a contributory factor towards my thinking about the place of these support teachers in the classrooms. In the second case study support teachers, class teachers and headteachers were all willing to talk at length about the changing roles. In fact, some of the support teachers used interviews almost as a therapeutic process, and tried to use me as a support figure and a sounding board. Again this in itself was significant as a reflection on the needs of the support teachers. I would have liked to talk to more children in the second case study. This was difficult as the support teachers were changing classes every twenty minutes in some cases, and targeting three or four children in every room. At this time

also, I was constrained by the limitations of being a part time researcher and fitting in with a full time job.

Reflecting on my role as observer, I found that although I was prepared with my notebook in the classroom, sometimes the most interesting episodes occurred in the staffroom, or even the corridor. This was particularly the case when considering how the support teachers shared their expertise informally through staffroom conversations. It was then difficult to decide whether to start making notes during what was purportedly the '*back regions*' (Hargreaves 1994) of teachers' time. The nature of my enquiry meant that I was in the role of researcher all the time I was with the support teachers; in the second case study in particular, the support teachers sometimes appeared to relax and assume they were 'off camera' when we were away from the classroom. It was also at these times when attempts were made to use me as a support and it was necessary to adopt a neutral stance towards proposals for future approaches towards class teachers.

Walker's (op cit) fourth problem is that of '*discovering something*'. In any reflective process a common question to ask is what would you do if you did this again. It would be easy, with hindsight, to be self-critical, particularly with regard to organisational and technical aspects of one's work but I feel that the process of initial enquiry, the field work, the subsequent analysis and further reading have clearly contributed towards my own professional development. What I did discover will be outlined in the final section of this chapter.

7.2 Recent legislation and literature

Throughout the 1980s, many of us working in what might be called 'the special needs industry' took for granted the move towards integration, mainstreaming, inclusion, the nomenclature for which was, and still is, unclear. This indecision indicates that thinking about these issues is still unformed, revealed by tensions within the legislation, and among professional responses at the chalk face and in the world of academic commentary.

Throughout my research I am conscious that I appear not to have challenged the model within which the support teachers in both education authorities intended to work. This is not because I adhere to any such model unthinkingly, but is more a result of choosing to focus on the relationships between teachers, one of whom was trying to influence the practice of the other. I am not saying here that their aim of trying to enhance special educational needs provision was incidental; I am trying to say that comment on the model

emerges in the conclusions rather than forming a basis of the research itself. Also, as I have already mentioned in the introduction to Chapter 6, many of the issues that have arisen in the research could be applied to teacher partnerships with different curricular or pastoral aims.

I feel that it is appropriate here to consider recent legislation and literature in the field of special educational needs which has contributed towards my thinking about support teaching. Since my fieldwork was completed, there has been a major piece of specific legislation concerned with special educational needs, namely, the 1993 Education Act, and the ensuing '*Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs*' (DFE 1994), commonly known just as the Code of Practice. While the Act was a restatement of special educational needs legislation, the Code of Practice gave practical guidance to local education authorities and to schools about their responsibilities towards all children with special educational needs. Fish and Evans (1995) indicate some of the contradictions and vagueness inherent within the Act and the Code. This was the first piece of legislation to consider provision for the needs of children who are not the subject of the statementing procedure, and yet it is not clear as to the responsibility for this large group without statements. With reference to my own research, this is the group of children about whom support teachers are often consulted, and in these classrooms, was the group of children who diverted the attention of support teachers away from those who had already been identified and sometimes statemented.

Fish and Evans (p.7 op cit) also identify another dilemma within this legislation. One of their sub-sections is called:

Reconciling administrative preoccupations with individual deficits with an acknowledgement of the role of schools in the creation of special educational needs.

This sums up the contradiction in that, although schools are advised to change practice, especially with regard to differentiation (Code of Practice 2.73) the focus on the Individual Education Plan as an instrument for identification and monitoring leads back to a 'child deficit' model of provision. Goddard (1997) criticises Individual Education Plans as being based on a behaviourist theory, a model which is linear, hierarchical and reductionist. While I agree that many schools are probably taking this approach, it may be more optimistic to consider Hart's (1996) view that:

There is no obligation on schools to follow the advice and procedures laid down in the Code to the letter, only to be able to justify whatever procedures they have

chosen to adopt as enabling them to fulfil their statutory and professional responsibilities to children whose learning gives cause for concern.

(Hart 1996 p. 115)

Hart would advocate that, rather than focus on the individual child throughout the five stages of assessment, barely acknowledging the context of the school, we should be ensuring that the school-based phase of the procedure should be about the search for possibilities within the school and classroom situation which have not yet been exploited (p.117). This fits in with her thesis about 'innovative thinking', a phrase she uses to explain a dialectic approach towards gaining a maximum understanding of the learning of individual children from which teachers may positively develop a wide range of possibilities. I cannot do justice here to Hart's complex ideas about learning but she does see a positive role for support teachers in this post-Code of Practice era. She feels that there should be as much additional support as possible in classrooms, with the role of support teachers being that of '*Socratic interrogator and collaborator, swapping roles and perspectives so that the fullest possible interpretation of a situation can be realised*' (Potts 1997 p. 188). Hart reminds us also that support teachers must be as rigorously self-analytical as the classroom teachers with whom they work, and not get drawn into '*generating ideas for development that are simply their own unexamined taken-for-granted notions of 'good practice'*' (p.119).

The House of Commons Education Committee (1993) stipulated that most schools would continue to require educational psychologists and support services and that '*the continued existence of support teachers was said to be an important element in maintaining an adequate range of special education provision*' (Fish and Evans 1995 p.28). Fish and Evans go on to point out the uncertainty with regard to the funding of support services, as in many cases schools have to buy them in from their own budgets. Lunt and Evans (1994) identify the problem that as some support services which focused on reading and behaviour have been disbanded (although exact numbers are difficult to ascertain) the long term effect may be to increase the number of statemented children as the special educational needs co-ordinators in schools cannot cope without outside help. In a later publication, however, Lunt (1997) posits the view that the increasing numbers of professionals operating outside schools who claim to have expertise with regard to children's special educational needs may have contributed to the still dominant notion that some children were 'someone else's problem' (p.48).

These increasing numbers of statemented children are said to form the basis of the Green Paper *'Excellence for all children Meeting Special Educational Needs'* (DFEE 1997) recently published for consultation. At first sight this document, which has been described as *'the most comprehensive overhaul of special needs since the Warnock Report'* (TES 24.10.97), appears to embrace the concept of inclusive education. Indeed, Thomas (TES 31.10.97), a strong advocate of inclusion, feels that although it has not gone far enough, we must nevertheless welcome the document as a potential instrument for increasing inclusive provision for children with special educational needs. During the week of the publication of this Green Paper, Estelle Morris, Minister for Schools, appeared enthusiastic about increasing inclusion, while recognising that teachers would not be so easy to convince (TES 24.10.97). Five weeks later, during a parliamentary discussion on this subject (BBC Radio 4 5.12.97), Morris appeared to be retracting from her advocacy of inclusion. This may be in response to the union pressure, especially from the NASUWT, who have proclaimed loudly in the media that teachers cannot cope with an influx of children with special educational needs. Despite counter protestations, the strong motivation to cut the escalating costs of statementing appears to underpin much of the thinking behind this Green Paper. This same motivation, one might say with a cynical view, has underpinned previous legislation on special educational needs procedures.

In terms of support services, however, the Green Paper advocates the continuance of this role, with local education authorities *'helping schools to develop, implement and review their SEN policies; and providing more advice on aspects of SEN policies (as distinct from documentation)'* (DFEE p.33). More specifically, there are references to the future of support services, such as, *'encouraging co-operation and perhaps specialisation in SEN support services'* (DFEE p.55) and *'The skills of SEN specialists - staff in special schools, units in mainstream schools, pupil referral units, and LEA support services - need to be developed to meet the increasingly complex range of children's needs and the variety of settings in which they are educated'* (DFEE p.64).

In a recent article Ainscow (TES 2.1.98) presents an option to *'develop new teaching that can stimulate and support the participation of all class members'* as a means of approaching increased diversity within the classroom. The points which follow in the article (a summary of ideas from discussions with pupils and staff in different countries) would certainly be endorsed by much of the school improvement and change literature (for

example, Stoll and Fink 1996), and would undoubtedly enrich the educational provision for children with special educational needs, who would no longer be the subject of individual programmes which are inappropriate to a modern mainstream classroom. The key to what Ainscow sees as providing inclusion through building on the best practice derived from the mainstream would, I contend, necessitate a change of attitude on the part of class teachers towards acceptance of all children. This in turn would require a boost in self-belief and self-confidence on the part of these class teachers in order for them to accept that quality classroom teaching, already within the remit of the majority of teachers, is effective for all children, and that there is no 'secret garden' from where special educational needs teachers pluck their choice methods and resources. I would contend further, however, that classroom teachers need support in this arena of change. This would not necessarily be support in terms of resources and teaching techniques, but the kind of personal support that would *'tip the motivational scales by increasing the incentive and self-belief to push through the barriers when they occur'* (Claxton 1996 p.271).

I will return to this theme in the final part of the chapter. In order to finish this section I would like to acknowledge that as well as change in the field of special educational needs provision, over the past five years, there has also been a considerable literature produced on changing and improving schools, and what makes schools effective or otherwise (for example Hopkins, Ainscow and West 1994). While some of this literature throws light on aspects of change which are useful in my look at the role of support teachers and teacher partnerships, school effectiveness as such is not the main focus of my research. I realise that C School in my first case study had enormous problems, although these were not unusual in that authority at that time. At the beginning of the research these problems presented diversions which dissipated, to some extent, the attention the support team gave towards children with special educational needs, and also led me to contemplate a wider focus for my case study (see Chapter 3).

7.3 The research questions

Through my case studies I have attempted to explore the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers, to consider its effectiveness in enhancing provision for children with special educational needs, and to consider the elements of this relationship which can be developed. In this final section I address these questions separately and, mainly through posing further questions, I try to broaden the perspective, linking in some cases to previous theory and research, and in some cases suggesting areas where further research could be undertaken. When I first began analysing my data in relation to these questions, I assumed that I would be able to produce a set of counteracting points from both case studies. I soon realised that outcomes were more complex and did not fit neatly into a comparative stance.

My first question was: *how is the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers perceived?* In none of the relationships in my case studies did the support teachers and the class teachers hold shared perceptions that they were working together to change the curriculum, pedagogy or ethos of the classroom. In the first case study, the support teachers discussed their aims for change openly but it did not seem that the level of discussion was always accessible to the class teachers either in its register or in its content. This is not to denigrate the class teachers, but rather to realise that the support teachers had all done specialised courses beyond the basic level of teacher training and were, therefore, equipped to discuss educational issues from a more theoretical basis. Having said that, do we now need to consider whether support teachers, and others coming into classrooms to change practice, should learn more about how they present to others? In his seminal work in this area, Goffman (1959) laid the foundations for recent, more popular psychology literature (Goleman 1995) and more academic social psychology writings (for example, Hargie, Saunders and Dickson 1994) which stress the need to develop our understanding of *'the skills and techniques inherent in interpersonal influence and persuasion settings'* (p. 246 Hargie et al op cit). Before persuading others, however, do support teachers need *'to tap the resources for growth in self-knowledge'* (Jersild 1955) so that *'the more one is conscious of what is happening in one's life and how it happens, the more there is at least the possibility of deciding what happens'* (p.35 Burton and Dimbleby 1995)?

In the second case study there was also a lack of shared perceptions between the support teachers and the class teachers. This could be explained by the fact that the support

teachers were not open about their reasons for entry into the classrooms, as we saw from Deirdre trying to gain access to Mr. P's classroom, (Chapter 5.3), and even appeared to adopt certain stratagems to avoid being totally honest in their intent. There seemed to be two reasons for this 'lack of honesty'. Firstly, the support teachers' own communication skills needed, on the whole, to be more developed in order to identify and overcome differing levels of welcome or hostility on the part of classroom teachers. (This links with the literature referred to in the previous paragraph and will come up again.) Secondly, in their wish to be seen as experts from the field of special education, the support teachers may have been denying the classteachers the opportunity to take on their own self-evaluation and development of self-knowledge in a move towards changing practice. To some extent, the need to be seen as an expert also led to relationships which could be interpreted as paternalistic or controlling. As we saw in Chapter 2 above, in the section on personal change, one of the criticisms that Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) levelled at teacher development through humanistic approaches was that they can be seen to be a therapeutic substitute for bureaucratic control, with care '*masquerading*' as control. In my personal view, I feel that Hargreaves and Fullan too easily dismiss humanistic approaches towards teacher development as they appear to equate the self-evaluation exercises prevalent in the 1980s (Merrit et al 1980, Schools Council 1983), which were mainly focused on curriculum and resources, with a more psychodynamic approach which can be seen in work such as Salmon (1988) and Claxton (1989 and 1996).

A further conclusion that I would like to offer in relation to my first question is that the support teachers, in both case studies, had more power and autonomy than the class teachers. This was not referred to overtly by any of the teachers but there were many statements from teachers, particularly in the first case study (see Chapter 4), to the effect that they could have done what the support teachers were recommending if they had more time away from the children to plan and prepare. The issue of non-contact time for primary classroom teachers is not one that support teachers can solve and is a continuing subject for debate at national level (Campbell 1985 and 1992). Support teachers can, as with Angela in the County of J, persuade headteachers to give their staff time for discussion and collaboration. This kind of practice depends on the management ethos of an individual school. Of course, support teachers are now more constrained as many local authorities (for example the London Borough of Tower Hamlets) require hourly accountability for time spent in schools and centres. Nevertheless, teachers who are

classroom ‘visitors’, such as advisers, literacy consultants, SENCOs, generally have more autonomy, being responsible for self-organisation in terms of time and location (Campbell 1992).

An unexpected issue relating to my first research question is the invasion of the class teacher’s domain by the support teacher. Such a feeling of invasion was defused in some cases by the personalities of some support teachers, but taking the concept of invasion further, one could see how some support teachers removed from the class teachers a sense of belief in their own ability to cater for all the class, and removed also a professional satisfaction and confidence in their own achievements. This led me to considering the dilemma of how we move people to a level of independence and confidence without implications of invasion or criticism of past work, or without engendering a sense of helplessness, or dependency on the ‘invader’. In any consideration of people who work with teachers in the classroom, such as support teachers, SENCOs, advisers, it seems to me that there is an almost inevitable temptation for classroom teachers to offload their responsibilities, whether these be for children with special educational needs, music or information technology, as examples. Yet, if we remove these ‘visitors’ (or ‘invaders’) are we asking teachers to operate without support? A solution to this dilemma may be to incorporate outside support into the teaching culture, with these supporters not taking on responsibility for children in any way, but taking on responsibility for nurturing teachers. After all, as Jenny said to Angela, in my second case study, *‘It’s funny, when you’ve talked something through the problem disappears’* (p.142 above).

The second of my research questions was: *to what extent does change in the curriculum and in provision for children with special educational needs emerge from teachers working in this model?* I monitored any change towards the end of the school year in both case studies, through the views of the classroom teachers, the support teachers, the children, and through my own observations of the classrooms and the children working. This was the most difficult area about which to draw any conclusions because of the influence of so many factors extraneous to the partnerships. In the first case study it was difficult to isolate outcomes of the support teacher - class teacher relationships from the general problems of the school. Here the support teachers chose to focus on working with two of the least competent teachers in what was judged to be a failing school. All support teachers have to work with teachers of varying degrees of competence. I would contend, therefore, that part of their training must raise awareness of how to make meaningful

classroom contributions which are appropriate to these differing competence levels. This is supported extensively by Fullan (1991), Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) and Biott and Nias (1992), in writing about change processes. It is an issue which seems to be avoided by support teachers perhaps for fear of making negative judgements about class teachers.

The changing provision referred to in the above paragraph, such as the introduction of new books and educational visits, may be seen as somewhat superficial and short term. This change is not so very different from the view about the enhancement of curriculum provision in the second case study. Here, where some of the support practice was seen as successful by the class teachers, change only took place at a very superficial level. While some of this change allowed children to participate in the curriculum on a temporary basis, albeit a curriculum which the support teachers still felt was unsuitable for all children, it did not change attitudes towards a positive embracing of the concept of inclusion on the part of the class teachers. Some of this change could be seen either as a way of 'luring' teachers on, through stratagems, towards considering further alteration in the curriculum, or as a way of establishing credibility and opening up curiosity. As long as the next stage is incorporated as part of the support process and this first stage is not seen as an end in itself, we could argue that this approach may be justified. At least the curriculum was being changed, no matter how slightly, and the 'trickle up' effect was occurring, albeit very slowly. I would, however, wish to incorporate a caveat here, and that would be a necessity for support teachers to know about first and second order change processes (Sarason 1982 and 1990, Cuban 1990, Watzlawick et al 1974) and to understand for themselves which theoretical approach they are taking.

I would also argue that some children with special educational needs were disadvantaged by this new type of support teaching. It is important to realise that inclusive education is not directly interchangeable with the term integration, as we have seen from the literature. Inclusion infers appropriate education for all children and this may mean that some children's needs could be met through a one-to-one, nurturing relationship of a therapeutic type. Children were being denied this relationship during the efforts of the support teachers to transform the classrooms into more supportive and nurturing environments. Their needs should be addressed during any such transitional period. We need to recognise here that inclusion is a much broader concept. If, ideally, society was inclusive (Dyson and Gains 1995, Mason and Rieser 1997, Thomas et al 1998) a school could easily embrace the varying needs of children, and here I mean for personal

support, without the class teacher regarding this practice as a discharge of responsibility. Similarly, we could, perhaps, embrace an individual teacher's needs for nurturing or support at some time as part of the normal culture of a school rather than, as is often the case, an admission of failure. Forty years ago Jersild (1955) produced evidence that a substantial number of teachers (one third of his sample) would appreciate personal time for discussing problems. I cannot believe that this need would have decreased.

My third research question was: *what elements of this relationship need to be developed to ensure a sound foundation for effective practice?* Here it is important to realise that two main types of support teacher have evolved, and are still evolving, within primary schools. The first of these types is the teacher, or sometimes the learning support assistant, who focuses on one particular child, usually in response to stated educational needs. The other type of support teacher, the one with whom I have been involved throughout my research, operates at a different level, as an enabler, facilitator or consultant for the class teacher, as well as, or sometimes instead of with the individual child. The reference by Potts (1997) to Hart's (1996) Socratic interrogator and collaborator would be appropriate here.

Just as new headteachers, and shortly deputy heads and SENCOs will have to gain compulsory qualifications in order to apply for their posts, so, I would argue, should anyone who could exert the kind of influence on class teachers which is possible for someone in a support teacher role. This element of the relationship, that of collaborator, critical friend, persuader, influencer, salesperson, could equally be applied to a wide range of educationalists currently engaged in promoting the extensive changes being propelled through schools. As Stoll and Fink (1996) explained:

Schools need critical friends, individuals...who, at appropriate times, listen and help them sort out their thinking and make sound decisions, who are not afraid to tell them when expectations for themselves and others are too low and when their actions do not match their intentions.

(p. 134)

It is not, however, an element that sits comfortably with all teachers as we saw from the nervousness expressed by some of the support teachers in this research. We also saw class teachers who found it very difficult to be assertive and express their own professional needs.

One of the elements of this relationship which needs to be developed, therefore, is that of personal effectiveness on the part of the support teacher. This would involve increased assertiveness, thereby increasing the ability to work with classroom teachers in diagnosing their needs. This is an issue which has been mentioned peripherally in previous research on support teaching but has generally been excluded in terms of planning programmes of staff development. We return here to my earlier mention of Goffman (1959) and the area of social psychology which deals with the extension of personal effectiveness skills (Duck 1992, Greenhalgh 1994, among others). I would suggest here, also, that there is a far greater need for personal skills development to be included in initial teacher training and in continual professional development. The practice and training of other professionals such as social workers, medicine, even the police, may be outstripping that of education in this area (Lacey 1995) and could contribute towards teacher education.

The support teachers in my research appeared to have only common sense notions of either institutional or personal change processes. An element in this relationship which needs to be developed, therefore, is an increased understanding about change, and an expectation that this understanding would be shared with the class teacher. It was also possible to identify elements in the performance of some support teachers which could be developed by an understanding of the need for self-reflection and self-change in order to prevent becoming locked into inappropriate ideological stances towards learning and the curriculum. As well as the need for support teachers to have a theoretical understanding about change, it would be useful as well for classroom teachers to acquire a more sophisticated understanding of the process they are being asked to go through. This would equate with the notion of the need for continuous teacher development as referred to by Goodson (1992), Stoll and Fink (1996) and Elliott (1991), among others.

The management of the support services involved in this research had recently changed their specifications for appointing new staff to include a stipulation that new members of the service had to have been class teachers in the immediate or very recent past.

Although such recent classroom experience is very desirable, the specifications for recruiting support teachers should be much wider and should include those elements which are harder to define, such as clearly developed and appropriate interpersonal skills, evidence of continuing professional development and a knowledge of change processes, as outlined above.

The establishment of support teacher credibility in the eyes of the class teacher influenced the extent to which new ideas were taken up or rejected. Once a teacher has stepped outside the classroom to take a management, advisory or higher education post, it is always difficult to convince those in the classroom of the practical competence of the, now, outsider (Biott 1991, Mawdsley 1992). An element of the support teacher - class teacher relationship must include a means by which credibility and trust are established. This again must rely to a great extent on the interpersonal skills possessed by the support teachers, and the faith in the process which is held by the class teacher.

Within the relationships in this research it was difficult to detect any discussions of theory concerning classroom practice. It was also difficult to find any evidence of discussions focused on the changes being introduced which were based on educational theory. Support teachers who have a theoretical understanding of educational practice need to be able to share this in an accessible manner, and at the right time in the relationship with the classroom teacher. The ability to be able to judge when to stop showing the class teacher ways of manipulating text and resources and to query the reasons for doing so is a subtle, but vital element in the support teacher's list of skills. This presupposes, of course, that support teachers themselves have sufficient understanding of their own practice.

7.4 Conclusion

In the 1980s and 1990s there has been a considerable literature in the area of special educational needs, and more specifically on support teaching, much of which has been referred to in this thesis. From my research, an examination through case study of relationships between support teachers and classroom teachers within changing local education authority provision, I have developed further insights into the working practices of the support teachers. The themes which have emerged from the literature and the research have enabled me to draw conclusions within the bounds of the case studies, and to offer, in the preceding section, some ways of taking practice forward effectively.

I would like to summarise these conclusions here: in order to establish successful *entry* into schools, classrooms and relationships, support teachers must develop a level of *expertise* which would enable them to use *stratagems or stalking horses* based on a sound theoretical understanding both of the change processes required and the *model of provision*

for children with special educational needs. I found little evidence that support teachers possessed this clarity of understanding and would suggest that it should form a substantial part of any training for such posts. Further, if support teachers, or any other professional visitors to the classroom, are to establish a level of *credibility* in order to facilitate *working relationships*, then interpersonal and communication skills should be highly developed. There is little evidence that this is happening either at initial or post qualification level of teacher training. Such relationships are not, of course, one way, and not only do class teachers need *time* to work with support teachers, they also need to have had their own professional *relationship* skills developed to take maximum advantage of what support services can offer.

The summary of the Green Paper on special educational needs (1997) asks the question: *What more should be done to improve the training of teachers and other professionals working with children with special educational needs?* (p.9). The conclusions of my research contribute to a deeper understanding of the professional development needed by support teachers and by class teachers to enhance provision. The complexity of training required in terms of, for example, ensuring in-depth understanding of theoretical models and the development of effective interpersonal skills, has scarcely been acknowledged either at initial or in-service level. Indeed, there seems to be an increasing danger that any such training may be jettisoned within an education system pressurised by the need for knowledge about '*new disabilities*' (Dyson 1997), such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder. If classroom teachers are going to overcome '*fear of the 'impossible'*' (TES headline 24.10.97) in terms of accepting an inclusive ethos in their schools, the findings of my research indicate that instead of reducing the theoretical input into teacher training and development, a sound theoretical understanding both of the change processes required and models of provision for children with special educational needs is required.

In my study, the three support teachers who were perceived to be the most successful, namely, Deirdre, Angela and Joyce, appeared to have created relationships in which the class teachers were dependent rather than empowered and confident. This reminds me of the overseas aid agencies' maxim, 'Give a person a fish, and you feed them for a day; give them a fishing line, and you feed them for life.' Support teachers have become adept at giving the 'fish', in the guise of materials and resources. From my research, I would assert that in order to 'feed them for life', initial training and continuing professional development should incorporate strategies which would give both support

teachers and class teachers the confidence and knowledge to deal critically with change and to extract from any imposed innovations those factors which will enhance educational provision. These strategies would include: the development of a theoretical understanding of models of special educational needs provision, ranging from political, economic and sociological models, to a consideration of integration and inclusion, and to the micro-implications for classroom practice; the development of a theoretical understanding of the change process both from a systems and an interpersonal perspective; the development of both a theoretical understanding of relationship skills and the practical training involved therein.

I would like to end this thesis by again referring to the Green Paper (op cit) which acknowledges that successful provision for pupils with special educational needs will be *'possible only if teachers and other staff are confident that they can support children's special needs...'* (p.62). This class teacher confidence can be developed through work with support teachers, as well as with SENCOs, advisors and educational psychologists. If initial training has taken account of the above strategies, and if the training and qualifications for these specialists has incorporated them to a large degree, then aspirations for enhancing educational provision for children with special educational needs may be realised.

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APPENDIX ONE

**List of questions which formed the basis (aide memoire) of interviews
with support teachers and with class teachers at the beginning of the
research in each case study**

APPENDIX 1

Interviews with Support Teachers

Autumn Term 1989

- feelings about change in role
- level of LEA consultancy with a) support teacher b) class teachers
- what INSET have they had
 - hard skills
 - soft skills
 - what omitted?
- how do they see their role [ie. advisory/consultative/collaborative - proportion of direct teaching?]
- skills needed for effectiveness
- how much change needed? in classrooms/schools (in order to affect access to the curriculum)
- tactics adopted with a) individual teachers
 - b) whole school staff
- what happens if meet a particularly hostile/defensive teacher?
- if you were in charge of setting up a service like this, what would you do?

Interviews with Class Teachers Autumn term 1989

Set scene - interview about support teachers

- what do you see as the role of the support teacher?

- is this different from what happens - have there been any changes - ways it's always been?

(if CT aware of changes - ask about consultation about changes)

- how, ideally, do you think children with SEN should be helped?

- how closely do you work with support teacher?

- do you find that having had the contact with the Support teacher you're working differently with children with special educational needs?

- could there be any general spin off from the techniques/approaches that ST uses

- personalities and individuals aside, what sort of person, what sort of level of expertise, what sort of arrangement would you like?

APPENDIX TWO

Transcript of an interview with support teacher, County of J

page nos. 228-233

TEXT BOUND INTO THE SPINE

Now the first thing I wanted to ask you, for you to say something about your feelings about the change in the role of the Support service.

The philosophy behind it is obviously right and I don't think you could argue with the philosophy behind it. The problem is in the implementation the lack of money and lack of information to schools, and lack of communication. I think that's been the big difficulty. The interaction between the powers that be from whence the change has come, er, which makes communication between the ISS and the schools difficult or doesn't provide a support which perhaps we thought we would have liked at the time we would have liked it. The back up always seems to be a bit behind, when it is needed. g

We've really gone on to talk about the next thing I wanted to ask you - really, how do you view the level of the LEA consultancy, both with the support teachers and the class teachers.

I think there's room for lots and lots of input. I'd like to see the level raised tremendously. So that there's far more of a team approach. There's still a lot of feeling amongst class teachers of being very threatened by the new system. They already see it, I think, as teacher assessment, which is unfortunate. It's just the, the time at which it's opened, when everybody's feeling threatened and the perspective is often wrong. They don't see it as a support, which is the way we see it. They see it as us, erm possibly criticising what they're doing. It's necessary to be very gentle in the approach. g

What kind of inservice have you actually had. I'm looking at it in two ways. There's inservice where you've got the hard skills, you know, knowledge etc... and then the inservice about the soft skills - the interpersonal skills, dealing with other people. And then if you could say that might have been omitted.

I think we needed more in those areas that you've mentioned - each of the areas, we needed more. Our change in role was presented to us almost fait accompli with which we were expected to cope. We have been given that - I'd like to see more in all the areas. I'd have felt much happier audible - child screaming outside] skills input, but I certainly would have felt happier with more interpersonal skills input. At the moment it puts a great deal on the personality of the ISS teacher. And that's OK if you're good with people. Otherwise it can be disastrous. Or if you're a personality that's shy.

So you see that as an important part of your...

[interjects] Very, vital, yes. Oh yes. Yes, because it's down to you at the grass roots, to deal with the problems as they arise, with harassed teachers with large classes. They want you to be practical and quite sure they haven't got time to care about the philosophy behind it. I think they want help with these children that they know need help. And if g

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perhaps, the help you're able to offer is not what they think would be appropriate then it's very much your province to convince them to have a

Yes, erm, you've really gone on again, to cover what I was going to say. I mean, how do you actually see your role? I mean, there's the advisory, the consultative, the collaborative, direct teaching. How much do you see ..

...A huge mixture, total mixture. Erm.. starting with [team leader] hands some papers over to [] Starting from where the schools are, I think, is the cardinal rule. And pitching your approach appropriately for these schools, so that if you've got a school that perhaps hasn't seen a lot of change in a very long time you don't go charging in like a bulldozer and upset the whole apple cart. It's got to be gradual in that situation. I see my role very much as a support role for the teacher. I think if you get that right, you get the rest right. You've got a situation in which a teacher says, Thank goodness, Somebody from the ISS will be in today, I can talk about it. I think if you've got that, then that's good.

Yes...so.. if you go into a new school, what kind of criteria do you use to feel your way, to see if you feel if they're ready to have it socked to them, or if they're just, as you say, feeling perhaps very threatened. Do you have any set criteria or is it more instinctive?

It's largely instinctive, it would be after all these years in special schools, it's bound to be. There are criteria. There are obviously certain questions that you ask that will tell you an enormous amount very quickly. For example, does the school have a whole school policy for special needs. That will tell you straight away whether the school has considered it, thought about it. Have you got a special needs coordinator, how do you identify children with problems. The schools that can say we do this, this or that, this, you know that you're a fair way down the road. Even if they haven't actually written the policy down. If each class teacher can say to you - oh well if that happens we do so and so, then you know that they've thought about it. And also, the ease with which class teachers let you into the classroom. If it's difficult to get into the classroom I'll go down as an over-enthusiast and you know you've got a lot of spade work to do.

Can I just go back a little bit. We were talking about the skills needed for your effectiveness. What.. do you think you could be a bit more specific ... what kind of skills do you feel...what kind of interpersonal skills do you feel would be useful?

A sense of humour. Above all things, a sense of humour. Tact. A sympathy for people and a sympathy for people. A sympathy for other people's problems and the ability to stick to your guns in the nicest possible way. It's very tempting sometimes to see a teacher who's been perhaps in a classroom for years, and doing a very satisfactory job. Erm.. and I don't think you have the right to charge in and try and change that but there might be aspects of it which are obviously needed to be changed because outside influences have changed. For example, the kind of child being accepted by the school might have changed. Erm, and you've

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got to present a way of change, which perhaps doesn't always look like change at the surface.'

LA That er...perhaps that proves that my questions do have some sort of internal logic.. once again you've gone onto the next point I wanted to bring up. I mean, I don't want you to mention individual schools, because obviously that would be unprofessional, but your general impression, how much change is actually needed in a classroom in a school in order to give children access to the curriculum.

A A great deal. But that's not an across the board judgement. I think you get areas of excellence. You also have to bear in mind always, the client group in the schools for which they are catering, which is one of the difficulties thrown up by the National Curriculum. There are obviously schools which need to go much more slowly to accommodate their client group than others. Some schools can work very [inaudible] very successfully because for their children it's appropriate, and has been in the past. But, over all, I think change is going to be essential, because the approach to children with special needs is changing. The old philosophy - if there's a problem, quick take it out and treat it somewhere else, which immediately labels the child. I would like to feel that it's the labels we're getting rid of and therefore, of course, we're looking to keep all children in the classroom wherever possible. And that is a very good thing. Infant teachers don't find it anywhere near as difficult as primary school teachers. Primary school teachers don't find it anywhere near as difficult as secondary teachers. It's an increasing difficulty as you go up through the years.

LA Yes...do you feel there are pockets of resistance?

A Oh yes, yes.

LA So what kind of tactics would you adopt, can you think of anything specific, I know you've touched on that already, I presume, you know, you work at two levels, at the level of the teachers and the whole school staff. Is there a kind of different tactics?

A Where you've got staff that's resistant as a whole I'd be looking to do some inset ^{work} ~~with~~ ^{the whole staff}, ^{giving} ^{the basic philosophy why, the} ^{practical reasons why} ^{I like to give} ^{positive, obviously if possible.} With individual class teachers I've found the best way of approaching a difficulty is to try and get some group work going within the class so that you demonstrate through practice that things can be done differently and that they work. And sometimes you have to do the PR job of putting it across as...could we try this as an experiment, and not necessarily always just with children with special needs. You might choose to focus on a child with special needs but pull in other children as well and work with that group within the classroom so that the classteacher hopefully, is picking up on what you're doing without you actually saying you should be doing this.

LA We use this word, I don't know about you, but I've heard this phrase 'access to the curriculum' a lot, how would you define it? What does it mean to you? It probably means different things to all.

APPENDIX 2

A I think it's allowing all the children to be involved with what the teacher sees as the focus of the activity in the classroom at any time. So if the teacher is focusing on a particular aspect such as a story, and doing some book work with the children, she's not going to feel oh, crikey, I've got to give that group a work sheet. That, to me, is what you're avoiding. So that there is a level at which all children are involved in the same activity, so that they don't see what they are doing is different. They see themselves as a unit, approaching the same piece of work at their own level comfortably.

LA I don't know whether in this part of Kent you're using this word differentiation.

A Yes, yes, we are, a lot.

LA Are you actually seeing that, is it seen as an ideal, as a philosophy?

A Both words. The philosophy, the underlying framework and the ideal is the ideal. The skill is extracting from the curriculum what you need to alter. To be able to perceive what you as a teacher need to alter to allow the children who are not benefiting to benefit.

LA What happens if you meet a particularly hostile or defensive teacher? What's your strategy then? Say within a school, a sort of average school, where you've got some people who are on the lines towards your own philosophy, some who are dithering, but perhaps there's one particularly hostile teacher, who you are expected to work with. What would be your strategy then?

A My first need would be to get into the classroom with that teacher in order to identify in my own mind their areas of need because I think when that happens you're almost always dealing with somebody who feels terribly threatened and the need is to remove that feeling of threat. So you need contact time with them, preferably without the children. You need the back up of the head. I avoid big guns like the plague. I, I would never want to be in a situation where I have to say to my own team leader or to the head you must force this teacher to do what I want. I would avoid that at all costs, because I think then you've lost. In that situation, as with any other I just think you need to go as slowly, to heighten your own perception of that teacher's need, rather perhaps, than the needs of the children at that point. There's no doubt the teacher will have great needs.

LA Right, the final point I wanted you to comment on, if you were charged with, if you'd been in charge of setting up a service like this, what would you have done, or what would you do?

A Panic [laughs] To make changes do you mean?

LA Say you were right at the beginning, you know, say there wasn't even a remedial service, you'd been given the money by someone to set up this service. How would you visualise, what would you do?

APPENDIX 2

LA First of all, I'd want total contact between all the schools and a lot of research done to discover what the schools felt was their need, how they perceived the service. How they felt they could best be helped, what they'd like to see teachers doing, their perceptions of special needs, in relation now, of course, to the national curriculum, and in relation to local financial management. If we were at the beginning now I think it might, the whole approach might well be different, because the planning stages were so long ago, before the national curriculum existed, entered our perceptions. But I think, consultation is the name of the game.

LA Thank you.

APPENDIX THREE

Example of analysis of field notes - Case Study 1

C School London Borough of A

page nos. 234-237

DAMAGED

TEXT

IN

ORIGINAL

25.11.

of unfocused collab. tdy.

4 keys

APPENDIX 3

11:00 am

Children making own plans for work - Personal writing profile

- waiting for new sheets to be photocopied

Working in groups - writing a diary - daily - most on task - 1 child using tape recorder & headphones

1 group in reading corner - out of class for 5 mins - questioned how many children were

reading - prearranged at break time - children were reading independently in his class - very few with no books available in corner

~~teacher~~ in corner with children reading

Paul - after photocopying sheets - working with individual children

1 child was reading

- out of class to get paper 4 mins

- out of class for another reason 8/9 mins.

working with 2 children (S & D)

4 children on tape - some problems getting tape to work.

Matthew - working with Sandra - painting

- explaining sheet to child in small group. G.T. - sat with child in a group.

Group round cassette → 7 - listening very intently.

Matthew - responded when questioned about what it is

is 'you know what it is' - wanted new sheets

low level class very bright at times

~~teacher~~

Paul (working with Matthew) doing work left by

Matthew came over to put plans away in his desk.

seen as home territory.

- out to cut up paper - Sandra still in art corner

Matthew - sitting on chair - still eating

Sandra listening to stories on headphones - always

Mat. moved to stand up in side corner - still eating

00-11-25

Ryan (has to "think" about what he did yesterday before he writes it down.)

- came over to talk to me - asked what I was doing - he was supposed to be doing maths - went to toilet - had picked up maths sheet.

Matthew - in rdg. corner - playing with a small computer game + Annette still out of room 11.58.

Matthew - playing with Annette - Mr. Mopples washing his open on chair.

Sandra left tape - went to mess around in practical corner -

Maths group finished - writing paper could not be found - girls went to get [] - came back at noon (carrying nothing)

Anthony + a girl came to ask me what I was doing.

Sandra wandering aimlessly - Matthew still in corner playing a game.

12.05 Sandra playing in corner with plasticine

Matthew - small comp. game

3 girls go out to hear 2nd years read

12.05 out of class - no mention why

Sandra standing at desk watching others.

- talking to - who gave her instructions

Matthew still playing - talking to Anthony

- working with Sandra

12.08 - still out of class.

12.45 Matthew playing with Sandra Sandra playing with Matthew

Matthew - still out of class

11.00 a.m. - 12.15 pm. 25.11.86 Bridge 4th yr G. Jefferys

11.10 in class

from 11.10 - 12.15 pm ~~now of classroom~~

separate times: 5 mins., 4 mins., 8/9 mins., 14 mins., 10 mins.

total 32 mins.

Firstly explained going to fetch paper - then to cut paper (remained empty handed)

Was this lesson jointly prepared - if so why materials not there?

Discuss afterwards on what went on?

How much learning took place.

Matthew off task for 1 hour

Sandra off task for 45 mins.

V. poor 25.11.86

APPENDIX FOUR

Examples of analysis of field notes

Case Study 2 County of J

page nos. 238- 246

10th October
17 Time + focus on ST + interaction

Arrived 9.00 a.m.

...A with a parent in Music Room -
working towards a contract -
another parent waiting to see
her - in staff room.

long talk with parent lots of
problems - child contract signed

A. acting as Counsellor

9.30-10.00 assembly

Involvement of parents in learning
ST acting as substitute for teacher?

10.00 Into 1st yr Kathy Harcourt²⁴

A. discussion - to watch children
who are giving behaviour problems - TT - only about 1 minute

C.T. wants group to do something else PC - d. teacher initiating

while she does - "totally inappropriate for them like looking
at a sentence". C/P for class = C Tead.

A. wants to watch "bunch" a class. - which children C/P for SEN = S Tead.

Discussion with teacher.

Children or quiet in corner.

Dinner lady/Menu in class as well.

A. talks to white teacher leads

children in discussion of books they've

been reading.

A + Menu having discussion about it

other corner of classroom.

C.T. - wants 5 children round same

tables.

Identified children - 1 girl level 3

1 girl (mother with probs)

1 boy - Gareth (mother problems)

then rings round them helpers

yesterday. + 2 boys

ST at ease in class CT easy with

ST in class - exchange jokes /

comments

A. observing interaction V children
+ Mum who was there to supervise
this group - cutting words out of
- photocopied, written list.

Class - making a paragraph from board
- written with no full stops & capital
letters.

A focuses on Gareth who is refusing to
work - Writing practice - practising letters -
she works out a way of getting him to
write one word - interaction with girls -
reprimanded by Mum - puts head back
in arms. 2 boys on other table -
Mum goes to help them - they are
independent 'want to get work done'.

A. leaves Gary - will come back &
talk to him when he's done some
work - wasting time this morning.
Gareth gets out of chair - goes to his
drawer - goes to look what rest of
cl. bring then comes back with
scissors - starts doing the same
work as other children in this group.
Gareth cutting out words but not
able to read them - not doing what
requested to do.

Mum comes from other table to look for
word 'dog'. Mum comes to Gareth -
explains what he's supposed to be
doing - make a sentence up with
cards - puts his head in hands -
then starts to 'know' cards on table -
Gareth puts head in hands again -
Mum makes a sentence - asks
Gareth to read it - girl across way
interjects - Gareth sulks again.

My observ. - children doing
diff. curriculum - separate -
not differentiation

ST substituting for CTeach. by
working with 'Mum helpers'

Change in child - not curvilinear -
behaviours being 'modified' to
fit work which is inappropriate &
too difficult

19.

10.20. A. intervenes - says he is wasting Mrs. B's (Mum) time.

A. repairs a boy who leans across table to grab glue.

Suggests tracing paper to one girl having problems with drawing.

Gareth makes a sentence

"Mum looks a the muddy got"

Mrs. B. reads it with him - he adds not a sentence - tells him he wants "dog" not "got."

A. in corner near drawers with girls.

Goes over to C.T. with Jessica (from group) to praise her - tell her taking to Gareth can now cut sentence words from sheet.

10.30. A. about to leave (watches group - advises Mrs. B. Gareth now using hand.)

falls Jessica to library - reminds her to bring her folder in case A or Mrs. B. needs it.

Then goes to find tracing paper to take back to home in classroom.

Jessica brought Oxford Edg Tree "Poppys Book" Stage 2 More Stories Pack A

Discussion A. - what would class be doing if A + Mrs. B. not there?

A. feels getting to stage where she would suggest perhaps a different way of working / grouping / class management - not group children with SEN together - all children could have got something out of the

Responsibility for the 3rd child

with MC - showing interest - responsibility

autonomous - responsibility - S.T. autonomous - tells CT.

Indicates a step she has to go through - "suggest perhaps" - see later notes.

Review PP?

Suggestion for change of no division in class

narration session - would have
put children in pairs - more able with
less able

looking at Jessica's contribution to a
class book about dragons - written
by group of SEN children.

- responsibility for SEN group -
separate

Read & discussed book - asked Jess. about
what happened to dragon - west.

Asked Jess. which book she
would like to read - chose "Floppy"
"Bark" "Floppy saw a rabbit"

- child's reading skills - change in
resources = O R Tree - enabling
child to appear like a reader

Floppy chased it. ^{some hesitation} It went under a fence

Floppy got wet - ^{fluent} couldn't get
"got" ^{substit.}
^{muddy.}

A. finished off book - talked about
champering dogs - told Jess what's been

ask her play. ^{SEN}
level 3 - specific difficulties - Does CT mind children being
writing - string of unrelated letters - "pulled out"?
result ✓ sound/cymbal.

Great as spec. diff. - response to
"short burst" - concentrated

input - sensible allocation of
time. Get her sound/cymbal allocation - emphasised by teacher - see
later notes.

Child deficit - to match curriculum

level 2 only in reports. Have
writing didn't work. Will use
Harris Day programme - seems
unable to handle home edg. prog.

- Change in work. - only for SEN?

A. Kately has got a difficult
school - behav + learning -
need re-grouping - Mrs. B
taking him by self?

- agrees with CT's definition of her
class.

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12.10.89

9.05¹⁴ classCT taking register - chil. on
mat S.T. sitting looking on.S.T. & C.T. going through a
level 1 intervention -

- Consultancy

(K.M. took children over to assembly)

K.M. also wanted to talk about
Gemma - another brain to think
about it - mother thinking of applying
to Parishurst (formal school) - problem
a social one.

Collaboration

CT looking for a
"motherly little girl" to "be nice" to
Gemma - and boy mentioned by ST
on Tuesday - talked about Katy.ST & K.M. - might change seating
around.

Change in organisation

S.T. "How good is Gemma's reading?"
K.M. "She" ST - get a little girl child to
give some time.- "never come across such a
disparate/separate bunch"S.T. - social education - more difficult
than educational objectives

Consultation

S.T. "How is John Jenkins?"

Seen on holiday - OK.

S.T. "level 1?"

K. - Definition of level 1 -
because of 5 children - would
put others on level 1. Cannot
cope with more children on
level 1. Only putting children
on level 1 who cannot read.

Mentioned other teacher who said she had 3x level 3.

ST. - Have to extend your curriculum the other way.

* || Suggestion of change - broaden curriculum differentiate more?

CT - levels not definite -

misnomer - not a level of intervention but C.

|| Consultation

appropriate curric. while I'm doing.

ST. View it as a level where twinges of anxiety - wonder if going to need anything extra.

CT. Concerned about Paul Gibbs. - spelling - some v. peculiar.

|| Suggestions of resources

ST. Have you got any copies of the log. checklist? Would you like one?

CT. Can I cope with anything else?

|| Consultation

ST. - Give you a few pointers. looked at a sample of writing from Paul. (had written masses -

ST. - Pouring out all the creativity - not got the natural controls.

Would be helped by drafting - when & where do you want to take a breath? Reasonably capable writer?

Change - suggested response

CT. No - started to read - very young.

29

ST. What's his over all potential? ✓ Consultation
 CT. Not v. high

ST. Take one of the twins (bright)
 doing drafting

CT. - whole group used drafting
 - you do it

ST. suggests she takes top
 ones while CT takes the
 difficult ones.

Change in org/child allocation

CT. Yes - work quite well. ✓ Consultation

ST. When planning for January PP - individual children

- got to plan objectives for next
 half term - get H.T. to release
 code teacher at a time

CT. Keep a listing of children
 at level 1 - don't keep a
 planned cover - for middle of
 year - plan for children's needs.
 Planning for science - on course.

v. open + easy
 discussion - but ST. is
 after she has to learn to
 take things slowly

Teacher for science. For lang. wk -
 header - not getting any forms
 filled in.

ST. Start going through documents ^{well.} Change - in evaluation
 ① - information available
 eg reading, Marie Clay concepts
 about print, Infant tests

ST. suggested school buys -
 retrieval techniques = over bible) - resources

(Any form of checklist.
 Infant checklist not completed on
 day in question - CT. - can fill it
 all off now - no print doing it)

ST. do a concept about print
 test while you're watching.

CT - no time to do this over
next few weeks.

Consultation

Discussion on next week -
admit it has to be different
because of setting objectives.
Agreed on a time next week.

PP

Con.

2. General prob. areas
language disadvantage

Consult. - for filling in levels -
substitute EP?

ST. From a teaching point of view -
where are the greatest problems?
Behavioural

CT. No. not behav. - caused by
frustration - no other model.

ST. Under achievement in all areas
- Maths is fine - slow

3.35 Children return

CT. Saw a face on board -
when I came back at break -
found it in smiling or sad -
the 5 children who make a
difference.

ST. Leaves - checks on the
Hunt working in library with
2 children each - +1 NTA

Into Mr. Lewis - he's out
D-G - taking class.

Into J - class - 1st years // More problematic - J is a
used diplomacy - children supply teacher - defensive
reading too difficult books -

A wants to place them

Need for change in reading
curriculum

APPENDIX FIVE

**Example of questionnaire response from support teacher,
School C, London Borough of A, at end of school year**

Could you please answer these questions as fully as possible - please use extra paper if necessary.

1. Was the way in which you worked as part of the CAPS team different from the way you had worked before as a member of

? **Yes**

(a) If it was different, could you give specific details of these differences?

① Team Approach :- Working collaboratively with support colleagues on the various aspects of support work, collaborative teaching, providing inservice and offering advice and consultation especially on children with special needs.

② Advisory/Consultancy Mode :- This part of our role was emphasised on the project, for the individual support teacher this is usually only a small part of the overall task.

③ Curriculum Development :- Project offered the chance of solid work on the above and resources to evaluate. /cont...if necessary overleaf

2. Why do you think changes in the approaches to supporting children with special educational needs have occurred?

① Failure of Remedial Model - Long been recognised that the 'remedial' approach labelled children and was unsuccessful (in the long term) in helping them overcome their difficulties

② Warnock Report + 1981 Ed. Act. :- Evidence against the 'remedial' model. Recognition of the rights of children with Special Needs

3. Please describe the ideal relationship with classroom teachers which would make the work of a support teacher increasingly effective.

Collaborative Teaching - ① Time and place to plan joint classroom teaching and access to appropriate resources. ② Dialogue which allowed negotiation of roles and responsibilities.

③ Shared commitment to evaluation and follow-up.

④ Open honest communication from position of equal status.

⑤ Contracting to working together and sharing management of a classroom with a truly child-centred curriculum in a whole-school environment.

policies on Equal opportunities and special Educational Needs as well as aspects of the Curriculum such as Languages etc.

⑥ opportunities to contribute to and influence the direction and effectiveness of whole-school policies

P.2

4. What kind of constraints do you feel were operating during your work with the CAPS team?

① Conflicting Views: ① schools (teachers + management) views of the project differed greatly from that of the project team.

the school expected 'demonstrations' of good practice.

② school had a very deep-rooted ~~and~~ cynicism ^{about} the likelihood of educational / personal / or social success for many of their pupils.

③ The Project Team: Some weaknesses in time-keeping and attendance within the team compromised

5. Could you please describe the role which you thought you were going to be carrying out during the project?

① Collaborative Teaching: The project team thought that this would form a large part of our role with our classroom colleagues.

② Advice + Consultation: - We expected to provide advice on matters such as classroom management and organization and be consulted on provision for individual children etc.

③ Inservice: The team discussed needs and interests with headteachers and staff and planned and designed appropriate inservice courses.

6. Do you feel your work during the year differed from the original conception of your role? ☒ Yes

If you do feel this way, could you please give specific details of the ways in which it differed?

Collaborative Teaching: We were able to work towards effective collaboration with some classroom colleagues but with others all responsibility was given over to the support teacher as soon as any commitment was made. In the case of other colleagues any attempt at collaboration was vetoed and support had to be withdrawn. The ~~more~~ more established the teacher was then the more difficult it was

clear in school that teachers much preferred the 'withdrawal' of children with Special Needs.

Advice was often sought and given but rarely acted upon or as in case of two children who came into school speaking no English and an African language not spoken by anyone else, acted upon for a while then dropped. The advice as to how these two children should be placed was followed then stopped because teachers disliked the inconvenience of children moving between classes.

Inservice :- Attempts at providing

Inservice based on discussions with staff were often disrupted by members of staff,

~~inservice~~.

Inservice was ~~most~~ ^{more} successful in school where staff were willing to contribute and discuss. In school meetings, on the whole, were well attended and staff expressed appreciation.

P.3

7. If you feel able to (confidentiality will be ensured) could you please give your opinion as to how the school(s) concerned could be changed further to bring about more effective educational outcomes, particularly with regard to children with special educational needs.

① Management: Neither headteacher provides leadership of any kind. Staff in both schools are able to run their classrooms as they see fit, which means very much on a day-to-day ad hoc basis. Both headteachers need training + support

② Low Expectation: the staff

need to look seriously at their deep-seated cynicism with regard to working-class children, black and white. They need to question their own motives in teaching as they do, in multiracial working-class areas.

8. Do you feel that success was achieved by (a) you personally, (b) the CAPS team, during the year?

a) Yes - To a degree b) Yes - limited

If so, could you please give specific details, no matter how small any kind of achievement may have appeared.

Personal- ① I learned a lot about negotiation and the need for clear communication.

Communication is the key to successful collaboration of any kind

② My experience of designing and delivering in-service was enhanced

③ Involvement in school management gave me insights into how not to run a

school

CAPS Project

① Established the basis for planning + evaluation of curriculum ② Introduced more child-centred approach to classroom organization

9. If you answered question 8 affirmatively, could you make some speculation as to why these successes occurred.

① Team Approach this approach provided an impact which management and staff had to take notice of, could not be dismissed or boxed into a corner in the ... that ...

② Project. Provided the basis for setting up lines of communication and established the need for teachers to contribute to discussion. The fact that the project was largely a result of an 'appraisal' (of school) gave it weight and ensured a response from the staff - in a way they had agreed to the project although a very different kind of project to the one they had envisaged.

③ Resources A real success in very practical terms in school was the re-ciling and re-stocking of the library/resources room. The staff seemed to view this as a practical help.

④ Management of School :- The headteacher allowed the team to influence and contribute to plans for school and staff development. The team were recognised by him as part of the school.

P.4

10. Do you feel that (a) you personally and (b) the CAPS team did not achieve some of your aims?

a) Yes

b) Yes

If so, could you give specific reasons why you think this might have been so.

Personally: The constraints were too great. I

found myself covering for colleagues (classroom and support.) The lack of commitment and professional inadequacy of two of the members of the team, at times, risked the viability of the entire project.

CAPS Team: The weaknesses in the team and the indifference in the school combined to negate some very worthwhile and exciting innovations.

11. Looking back over the year, do you have any other reflections you would like to add? Please be as open and honest as you wish. (These replies will not be seen by anyone else apart from me and possibly my tutors at the Institute of Education).

Overall I think that despite what I've just written which may seem very negative, we ^{success} ~~and some~~ ⁱⁿ school were the project operated largely ~~mostly~~ by the end of the year, the staff had accepted the need for planning and evaluation of topics and themes. By the end of the year they were involved in team and collaborative teaching on a more consistent level. In a school where staff relationships were complex this was a major achievement.

At the beginning of the project the team viewed school as the most problematic but as we began to become more involved the picture

Thank you very much for your time in completing these answers.
Linda Harland June 1988

became clearer. the second school has more problems in that it sees no need to change or even review its practice. ~~and if any~~ The staff expectation of success on any level

the pupils is lower
 and ~~more~~ the cynical dismissal
 of parental involvement is more institutionalised.

In school if success can
 be measured in terms of heightening
 of awareness of the need to evaluate
 and change then success was
 achieved. If it can be measured
in terms of sharing and discussing
problems and attempting to help each
other then some success was achieved.

In terms of the needs of children
 with Special Educational Needs *

School have a very long way to
 go. the ~~best~~ children in school
 suffer from institutions which militate
 against their best interests and offer
 curriculae which, on the whole,
~~do~~ ^{do} not reflect their backgrounds
 and interests and certainly do not
 provide challenges and opportunities to
 their aspirations and ambitions.

APPENDIX SIX

**Examples of a questionnaire response from class teacher,
School C, London Borough of A**

page nos. 256 - 260

APPENDIX 6

QUESTIONNAIRE ON CAPS PROJECT

I would be grateful if you could answer these questions in the fullest way you can. Your replies will be treated with complete confidentiality. In no way will individual replies be identified. If I wish to use a quote anonymously I will seek the permission of the person from whom it originates. If you wish to, you may omit your name.

Name

Class

No. in class - boys - girls

1. What was your view of the original intentions of the CAPS team?

To organise the learning resources in the school, mainly the school library.

2. Do you feel the work of the team in your school has matched your original view? YES/~~NO~~

(If NO can you please explain in what ways you feel it has differed?)

During the summer term, I could clearly see the effect of the work the team had put in earlier with the opening of the school library.

3. How many children in your class do you consider to have special educational needs? boys girls

6

0

4. What kind of support was available to these children before this academic year (ie. before July 1986)?

五

5. What support has been available for these children this year? (September 1986-July 1987)?

No real support at all.

APPENDIX 6

6. Who do you think should support children with special educational needs?

Please tick

- class teacher
☒ support teacher from within the school
support teacher from an outside service?

7. Where do you think children should receive support

Please tick

- ☒ within the classroom, eg. in a group/individually withdrawn from classroom

children with severe behavioural difficulties may need to be withdrawn from time to time.

8. Which of the following do you consider to be the cause of children's special educational needs:-

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 5 - home background | 1 - low ability of child |
| 4 - specific problem within child
(eg. poor sight, hearing, motor control) | 7 - curriculum |
| 3 - materials/resources available | 6 - school organisation |
| 2 - teaching methods? | |

(Please number 1 - 7. No. 1 being the factor which you consider causes the greatest problems, no. 7 being the factor you consider causes the least number of problems).

9. Do you consider that the provision of resources has been improved this year? YES / ~~NO~~

a) IF YES - can you give examples? and can you say in what ways this improvement has affected your work?

The children have interesting fiction books to read.
They enjoy reading.
The library is there for the children to work in.

b) IF NO - what kind of improvement would you like to see take place?

10. How important do you see the provision of a good school library? (On a scale 1 - 7, where 1 is not important, 3/4 no more or less important than other resources, 7 very important) Please give a figure.

7. Extremely important.

APPENDIX 6

11. Can you give a brief account of how you have seen the work of the CAPS team in relation to the resources in your school?

Establishing the library has been important
Time spent in organising the terms work
will ensure resources are circulated
around the classes.

12. Do you consider this work to have been useful?
(Could you please give reasons for your answer)

Yes.

13. What connection do you see between the role of a Learning Support Teacher and the provision/improvement of resources?

In my opinion the learning ~~resource~~^{support} teacher is
there to support the teacher in the classroom with
children who are having learning difficulties
They need a variety of resources to do this adequately
so the improvement of resources in the school must be
an important concern to the Learning Support Teacher

14. Do you think the children will be able to take on most of the
responsibility for running the library? Depends on the age of the
children and their maturity. There should be ~~no~~^{not} reason
why a lot of responsibility for running the library
should not be delegated to the right children

15. Do you think that any of the CAPS activities have contributed towards your
own development as a teacher? (Can you please give details if necessary)

The majority of the time has been spent with
the fourth years. However time with the CAPS
team organising the terms work in advance has
been valuable. The book week was very
successful and shows the potential of the
children in doing self directed work

16. Has your work undergone any change this year in the following areas which
may have been due to self-re-evaluation after CAPS discussion/intervention/in-
service?

- curriculum (please state which area)
- classroom organisation
- resource organisation
- attitudes towards special educational needs

(please give further details below if necessary)

APPENDIX 6

17. What future developments could you envisage carrying on from activities this year?

~~Hopefully there will be a clear~~

Hopefully more time will be spent in organising the curriculum, and planning in advance what we should be teaching the children in the areas of Topic, Language, Science and Maths

18. What kind of support would you like for yourself as a teacher?

I would definitely appreciate more support in the classroom with children who have learning difficulties. Especially in the area of building language skills and ^{with} help ~~with~~ individual children rather than the class as a whole.

19. Can you specify any ways in which you feel that children with special educational needs in your class have benefitted from the work of the CAPS team this last year?

NONE -- They have been working with the Fourth years.

20. Please make any further comment here or overleaf.

Throughout the year I felt the role and intentions of the CAPS team were continually being refined, and even changed. I got quite confused in the end.

I would like to thank you for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. I appreciate that your time is valuable. It is very important to find out the opinions of the teachers in schools where support services work in concentrated and I hope to be able to look at similar projects in other authorities.

Linda Harland